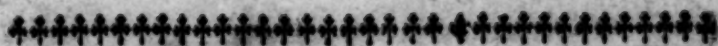




LOUISA:

OR,

VIRTUE in DISTRESS.



LOUISA



VIRGIL IN DISTRESS

LOUISA:

O R,

Virtue in Distress.

BEING THE

History of a natural Daughter
of LADY * * * *.

Nullum numa abest, si sit prudentia..

Juv.

*Quod quisque vitet, nunquam homini satis, Cautum
est in horas.*

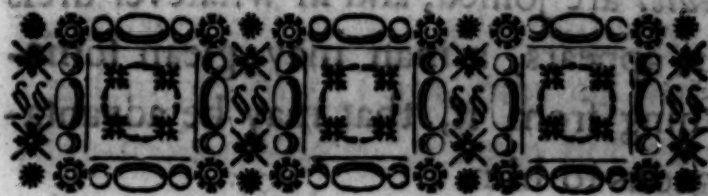
Hor.

L O N D O N

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MDCCLX

1760



PREFACE.

BOOKS are intended for the general emolument of mankind, to applaud virtue, and to explode vice; and in whatever despicable light the world may look upon novels, they are seldom defective of noble and virtuous characters, and are wrote with a view of entertaining as well as amending the

vi P R E F A C E.

age we live in : the *utili* and the *dulci* are joined, and in whatever dress it appears, a man may glean something from it, that may be advantageous to him.

OUR modern critics, who send their monthly productions into the world, are oftentimes very severe upon books of this kind ; but their criticisms, however cutting they may appear, are not of any great consequence, since I have observed that they have recommended novels, which, had they allowed themselves leisure to peruse, their praises would, I am persuaded, have greatly dwindled.

BUT

P R E F A C E. vii

BUT in mentioning these worthy gentlemen with so little respect, I am sensible that I am playing with edge-tools, which, if I am not very cautious, will be apt to cut my fingers. Cry your mercy, Sirs ! pity a poor author who writes for the bread that perishes !

THE frequency of this species of writing is not the only thing which makes it so much disregarded ; the absurdity of it in general, has been a great means to bring it into contempt : that one might cry out with Horace, *Perditur hæc inter miseris lux.* A man who never ventures farther than the precincts of his own parish-church, let
his

his capacity be what it will; he wants a thorough knowledge of the world to make him capable of writing these bagatelles: a novel writer should have a clear head, a good heart, and an inventive brain; he should have a thorough knowledge of men and things, that he may delineate his characters agreeable to life; for when an unnatural stroke appears, it deadens the rest of the picture.

THE conclusion of novels usually tend to make the shining characters happy: this manner has sometimes been censured; but I must do my brethren the justice to acknowledge, that it is quite agreeable to reason; for after carrying your parties

P R E F A C E. ix

parties through every scene of distress that can possibly be imagin'd, the humane and generous heart, is pleas'd to find that their virtuous troubles are, in the end, crowned with peace and happiness.

THE generality of writers compose their works according to their own dispositions; if the author be dull and phlegmatic, his works are a compound of cruelty and horror; and, on the contrary, if he is gay and chearful, it is easily known by a perusal of his writings. The author of one of our modern novels seems to me to be of the former, for through the whole course of his work is one continued scene of cruelty and horror; and rather inspire

P R E F A C E.

spires the mind with terror, than with any pleasing sensations. Now it would have been as easy for me to have made my principal characters unhappy as not; but having a great deal of the vis comica in my disposition, I chose rather to dismiss my readers with a smile of contentment upon their features.

I HAVE observed that most of our modern novels abound with a lady G: the great Mr. Richardson form'd a compleat plan, which all his followers have run into: can any one be blamed for following so excellent a pattern? I myself am not blameless in this respect, since I have introduc'd a lively character. How happy should I think myself
to

P R E F A C E. xi

to catch one emanation from so superior a genius, which would be a sufficient subject for my vanity, could any of my readers but find the least resemblance to the features of a lady G.

I AM acquainted with the works of Mr. Richardson, but as to his person I am an entire stranger to, so that I cannot be suspected to flatter him: yet if he is inclined to recompense me for what I have said in his favour, let him — if Louisa has any merit, recommend her to the world, since the recommendation of such a man as Mr. Richardson, must make every person desirous to peruse it.

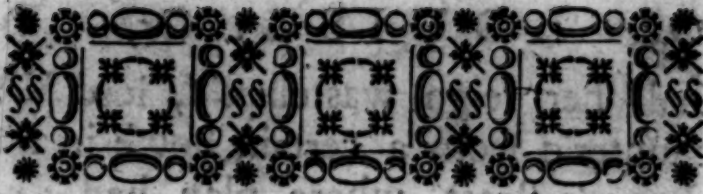
LOUISA:

PREFACE

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son's grammar which would be a
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LOUISA



LOUISA:

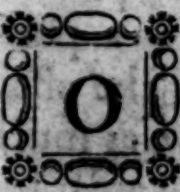
O R,

VIRTUE in DISTRESS.



CHAP. I.



 NE night in the month of November, bedeck'd with all her glorious attire of stars, distributing her favours to men, according to their several degrees; giving desires to the poor, cares to the rich, to the hapless complaints, to the happy sleep, and jealousy to those in love. When
B half

half her reign was elaps'd, lord W. faunter'd from a certain house in St. James's-street, where play had depriv'd him of a considerable sum of money: he had not proceeded far, when by the glimmering of the lamps, he observ'd two men in close consultation; his lordship had the curiosity to listen to their conference. You need be under no apprehension, said the elder of the two, my lord's generosity is unbounded: I will not, answer'd the other, undertake an affair of such a nature without a large reward; besides, continued he, I have occasion for money at present. There, answer'd the first, is a purse of fifty guineas, and when the affair is concluded, you shall have as much more. Lady Louisa, towards the dusk of the evening, generally takes a turn in the park, in the most unfrequented walk, where you will undoubtedly meet her: his lordship does not care to punish her with his
own

VIRTUE in DISTRESS.

3

own hand, tho' her imprudent conduct deserves it, as her fatal mistake, should it ever come to be known, would be an eternal blot in the escutcheon of that ancient and honourable family.

Lord W. retir'd upon hearing this, and got off without being discover'd: he had drank too freely of the juice of the grape, to be capable of remembering the street from whence he had gain'd this intelligence; the most material circumstance, however, did not escape his memory, and he was resolv'd, if possible, to prevent the death of the lady. Accordingly, the next day, towards evening, he went into the park, in the most retir'd walk; he there observ'd a young lady of a most engaging form, walking with a slow pace; she had a settled melancholy overspread a set of the finest features in the world. Lord W. had not conceal'd himself long, before he observ'd a man come up to

4 L O U I S A : Or,

her wrapped in a great coat ; he ran up to him immediately, and came time enough to prevent the execution of his wicked design. The fellow, enrag'd at his disappointment, fir'd a pistol at his lordship, which happily did him no hurt ; the wretch then immediately took to his heels, and made his escape.

Lord W. ran to lady Louisa, who had fainted away ; he carried her in that condition to his coach, which waited for him in Queens-square, she fell into successive fits, insomuch that his lordship imagin'd that she was dead. When he got home, he had her put to bed, and order'd a surgeon to be sent for to bleed her ; when she came to herself, she enquir'd of the servants who attended her, in whose house she was, and the name of the gentleman who had been so kind to her ; which they inform'd her of.

The

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 5

The next morning she sent to beg to speak to his lordship; she return'd him thanks for his civility to her, and beg'd to know by what happy accident he came to her relief. Lord W. then gave her a succinct relation of the discourse which he had heard in the street.

Ah! cruel brother! cry'd she, could my unhappy passion for Sir Harry, inspire you with the cruelty of depriving your sister of life!—Oh! Sir! compleat your kindness by going to Sir Harry Owen, and informing him of my unhappy fate! plead for me!—tell him, that it is for the love of him, my cruel brother doom'd my death! I fly, madam, to execute your commands, and hope I shall be able to bring you such an account, as will set your heart at rest. — His lordship then gave orders to his servants that the lady wanted for nothing; and immediately set out for Sir Harry Owen's, where he found

6 L O U I S A : Or,

the family in great confusion : upon enquiry if Sir Harry was at leisure ; he was inform'd that he had been that morning brought home desperately wounded, and that the surgeon had but small hopes of his life. Lord W. was greatly amaz'd at this piece of intelligence, and could not help thinking that his wound came from the same hand, as that intended for lady Louisa : he desir'd the servant to tell his master, that he had an affair to communicate to him of the utmost consequence.

Upon being admitted into the room, Sir Harry, with a faint voice, ask'd him, to what he was indebted for the honour of this visit ? I have a little private business with you, Sir Harry, reply'd his lordship ; upon which he order'd his servants to retire. Lord W. then inform'd him of lady Louisa's story ; at which he fetch'd a deep sigh : I fear, my lord, that my wound comes from the same quar-

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 7

quarter : your humanity and generosity, I hope, will meet its reward, for my own part, I have not many hours to live ; I feel my strength decaying : tell the charmer of my soul, that the wrongs which I have done her, are the only stings which hurt me at present ; but they proceeded from too much, and not too little love. I lov'd her more than life itself ; and could I but live to make her any reparation, by giving her my hand, I should be happy.—I need not, my lord, keep any thing a secret from you, who seem so much her friend : the last time I had the happiness of her company, she inform'd me, with her eyes swimming in tears, that she fear'd that she was with child, and beg'd of me, if I had the least regard for her reputation, that I would marry her : which I promis'd with many oaths to perform whenever we had a convenient opportunity, she being in continual

8 L O U I S A : Or,

real - fear of her brother, — but I find myself too weak to give you any further particulars, suffice it to say, that our conversation was overheard, since which time, we have never had any opportunity of meeting : he then took a parchment from under his pillow, and proceeded : this, my lord, is my will ; my personal estate, for want of heirs, goes to my brother's son ; the remainder, with plate and jewels, I have left my dear lady Louisa, exclusive of a few legacies to my servants. I would have left her executrix, but as that must necessarily be a great inconvenience to her, I was going to send for Mr. Traffic Worthy, the merchant, whose general good character you must have heard of ; if you have not, my lord, give me leave to assure you, that he is a gentleman that merits your esteem : but if your lordship will do me the favour to be my executor, I shall think myself greatly oblig'd to you.

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 9

you. With pleasure, answer'd his lordship, I will undertake any thing to make you easy. Sir Harry return'd him many thanks for his obliging condescension. After the alteration in his will, he call'd in his servants, and told them, that he had left lord W. his executor; and turning to his lordship, beg'd him to take care of a set of men who had been ever faithful to him.

Sir Harry had exhausted his spirits by talking so much. Lord W. thought it proper to retire, after leaving orders with the servants, to send him word if they found any alteration in their master before the evening, when he intended to be with him again.

'Tis now time to return to lady Louisa, whom lord W. had left in the greatest anxiety and affliction, fearing, lest her dear Sir Harry should refuse to administer any consolation to her; but when the clock struck

B 5 twelve,

10 L O U I S A: Or,

twelve, she began to grow impatient for the return of lord W: she was traversing the room in great uneasiness, when the servant enter'd to let her know that his lordship was return'd ; and if it was convenient, he would do himself the honour to wait on her. Lady Louisa was secretly pleas'd with this piece of politeness ; she return'd for answer, that she waited with impatience to know the result of his visit.

Lord W. enter'd the apartment, with a concern which he could not hide from the scrutinizing eye of his fair guest. Those looks, my lord, cry'd she, are a sufficient testimony of my misery, without any further recital ; her lovely eyes bedew'd with tears. What can our sex expect, when we trust to false deceitful man ? —Curs'd be that hour, when first my passion like a torrent overturn'd my reason ! —and left the unhappy Louisa, forlorn, deserted, and oppress'd with
for-

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 11

forrow ! — Madam, interrupted his lordship, you greatly wrong Sir Harry by your unjust suspicions, the generous man would e'er this have thrown himself at your feet, had not an accident depriv'd him of that pleasure. What accident ! cry'd she, with a look full of horror. My dear lady, answer'd lord W. do not make yourself uneasy, I hope his wound is not so bad, but he may recover. What ! is he wounded then ! — has the same curs'd hand depriv'd him of life ! Him ! the dearest, kindest, best of men ! — Answer me quick ! — Is he murder'd ? Sir Harry, madam, returning home last night, was set upon by a wretch, who stabb'd him, before he had time to defend himself. Then he is dead ! cry'd she, and I am lost for ever ! Here her strength fail'd her, and she fainted away ; when she was recover'd, she beg'd of his lordship to tell her without reserve, the utmost cruelty of
B. 6.
her.

12 L O U I S A: Or,

her fate : that Being, cry'd she, who is never deaf to those that call upon him, will, out of his abundant mercy, enable me to endure the fiery trial.

Lord W. then acquainted her with every circumstance relating to Sir Harry, and gave her the will. Generous man ! cry'd she, this is too much ! I have not deserv'd it from him ! I that could form suspicions contrary to his honour !—A wretch given to death by a brother whom she doated on ; for a trivial fault of love !—and yet that fault, trivial as I may call it, has depriv'd me of every thing I hold dear : even the strong barrier of virtue, that gem of honour, fled before it ! — forgive my despair and tears, my lord ; they will ever flow, while life and remembrance remain !—fly, my lord ! and tell the dear, the generous youth, that if he dies, Louisa cannot long survive !

Lord

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 13

Lord W. did every thing in his power to comfort the afflicted lady, and promis'd to bring her an exact account of the condition in which he found Sir Harry : he then took leave of lady Louisa, in order to proceed to an enquiry after Sir Harry ; where we will leave him, to speak of the earl of R. the wretch who was the cause of this confusion.



C H A P. II.

E A R L R. was the offspring of as worthy an ancestor as any this isle can boast off, but unhappily marrying a woman not only below him in birth and fortune ; but even destitute of every qualification that could render her noble lord happy ; but the charms of her person overcame every other consideration.

The

14 LOUISA: Or,

The nobleman of whom we are at present speaking, inherited the disposition of his mother; pride, arrogance, envy, malice, and revenge, were the predominant passions of his soul. Lady Louisa inherited the sweetness of her father; she was lovely beyond expression, with a sweetness and benignity in her looks and behaviour, which never fail'd to attract the regard of every one: happy was it for her that her mother died when she was in her infancy. Lady Mary M. her father's sister, had a pressing invitation from the earl to come and live with him again, and take upon her the care of his daughter's education.

Lady Mary M. had in her youth been a reigning toast; she was of a middling size, but of so elegant a form, that it drew the admiration of the beholders; her eyes had a most engaging softness in them, which was peculiarly charming; her complexion
deli-

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 15

delicate, a pleasing sensibility in her features, which commanded esteem: tho' she had a great share of wit, yet her modesty was so great, that it never suffered her to shine so much in conversation, as she was capable of; but her good sense never failed to exert itself: she had been conversant with the best authors, both ancient and modern, and had reaped instruction from them.

Her father had on some account been banished the court, for which reason lady Mary and her brother were under the inspection of a distant relation: it was owing to the instructions of this worthy woman, that she formed all those principles for which she was so much esteemed: philosophy was her darling study; and, being bred up as it were in the school of adversity, she had learnt to bear the contingencies of life with becoming fortitude.

Lady

Lady Mary had a heart formed for love ; a heart tender and susceptible of the most refined passion : this susceptibility was the occasion of all her future misfortunes : not all her virtue, not all her philosophy, could guard her heart from love. Mr. M. who had married her cousin, was the object of her flame : in vain did she combat with this growing passion ; in vain did she fly to books for relief ; the pleasing idea of Mr. M. intruded to her imagination, and made her incapable of relishing any subject but what treated of love : the finest strokes of her favourite Milton, had now lost all their beauty ; that author, whom once she had so much admired, now appeared dull and insipid. Mrs. M. was a person who was infinitely dear to her ; they had entered into the strictest friendship long before her marriage. Mr. M. had seen the world, and had every perfection which a mortal can attain to:

to: lady Mary had been ill during the courtship, which was the reason that she never saw Mr. M. till she came with the rest of their friends to compliment them on their marriage.

Mr. M. has since confessed, that from the first view of lady Mary, he grew unfaithful to his wife; he soon found that their tempers were exactly the same, and seemed as if they were kindred souls.

Lady Mary not suspecting the disorder which she always could perceive in herself at the sight of Mr. M. proceeded from love; she was too innocent to suspect love had any share in her esteem; she indulged the pleasing inquietude, till by degrees his idea was never absent from her: she then began, but too late, to suspect that her uneasiness could proceed from nothing else but love. A shower of tears flowed from her lovely eyes, on the bare suspicion
of

18 L O U I S A : Or,

of her guilt. What infatuation ! cry'd she, can possess me ? Can I wrong the woman whom I so dearly love, by indulging a criminal passion for her husband ? Honour, virtue, religion, all forbid it ! Neither piety, nor the pleasing conversation of her brother and her worthy relation, could calm the anguish of her tortured mind : she sought in solitude to regain her wonted peace ; but alas ! peace fled from her breast, and in its room took place, a guilty and unfortunate passion !

Mrs. M. complained of her unkindness, in never frequenting her ; indeed, my dear lady Mary, the favour of your company is as agreeable to Mr. M. as it is to me ; and he has often confess'd to me, that he is never so happy as when he is bless'd with your enlivening conversation ; and it is by his desire, my dear, that I am now come to insist upon your not being so great a stranger : had
Mrs.

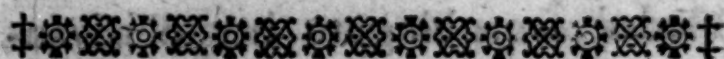
VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 19

Mrs. M. but remarked the confusion in which she had thrown her friend by this speech, she must have concluded something to her disadvantage.

Mrs. M. had a natural gravity in her temper, mixed with a great share of good nature, and was of so happy a disposition, that tho' she passionately loved her husband; yet jealousy never ruffled the soft serenity of her temper.

Lady Mary, by the earnest desire of Mrs. M. went home with her; but was determined, within herself, to behave in so cool and distant a manner to Mr. M. that should check every thought to her dishonour: but alas! how weak are all our resolves, when love has got possession of our hearts? Mr. M. after saluting lady Mary, gently rebuked her for being so cruel, as to refuse her company to friends who esteem'd it as the greatest favour

20 L O U I S A : Or,
favour she could possibly bestow on
them.



C H A P. III.

LADY Mary blush'd at this discourse, but did not dare to make any reply, lest by her timidity and confusion, she should give him room to suspect what passed in her heart. Whenever their eyes met, they display'd such softness, that was sufficient without words to let them into the knowledge of each other's sentiments: the more Mr. M. saw of her, the more he admired her; and notwithstanding the wrong he was doing to the best of wives, he yielded without remorse to the guilty passion.

Lady Mary's conversation was particularly pleasing; her lovely mouth was formed for persuasion; she was elo-

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 21

eloquent, with all the modest graces of simplicity; she never open'd her lips, but he devoured every word that was utter'd from the finest mouth in the universe.

Lady Mary could not think of the injury which she was doing her friend, without horror: one moment she thought of retreating; but the next, a look from Mr. M. made her boasted philosophy of no service: she however avoided every opportunity of being alone with him, with the most virtuous caution; but in vain, for he watched her so narrowly, that he had often an opportunity to speak of his passion, in terms so soft and tender, and at the same time blaming himself, for his apostacy from a wife who loved him in so kind and affectionate a manner. Why will you not favour me with an answer, my dear lady Mary? Yet your tears sufficiently reproach me for my crime.

Lady

Lady Mary in every thing superior, in love could boast no fortitude ; she was so cruelly situated, that she could not fly from the temptation, without giving suspicion of her guilt ; neither had she strength of resolution sufficient to bear the absence of a man, the very sight of whom was become so necessary to her peace : happy had it been for her, had she fled before love had taken root in a heart so tender ; but alas ! to whom could she fly ; her father banished, forsaken by her friends, no one to comfort, no one to relieve her : with a heart so naturally formed for the soft and tender passion, she could not love with moderation ; her pride, her virtue, her religion, all condemned this passion ; yet how true is it, that love knows no distinction ? even friendship, that natural sympathy of human hearts, cannot resist the soft prevailing passion. How just are these

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 23
these lines of the inimitable Mr.
Rowe?

Love is, or ought to be our great-
est bliss,
Since every other joy, how dear
soever,
Gives way to that ; and we leave
all for love.
At the imperious tyrant's lordly
call.

In spite of reason and restraint we
come,
Leave kindred, parents, and our
native home.
The tremb'ling maid, with all her
fear he charms,
And pulls her from her weeping
mother's arms ;
He laughs at all her leagues, and
in proud scorn
Commands the bands of friendship
to be torn :

Dis-

Disdains a partner should partake
his throne,
But reigns unbounded, lawless, and
alone.

Such is the tyranny that love ex-
acts from all its votaries.

Mrs. M. came one day into the room when her husband was breathing forth his passion, while lady Mary was in tears: they were both in such confusion, that they could not think of an excuse. Mrs. M. ran to her friend with an eager sollicitude, and beg'd to know the meaning of her tears. Lady Mary blush'd, but could return no answer. My dear, cry'd Mr. M. (fearful what constructions his wife might put on her friend's tears) lady Mary has been weeping for the unhappy lot of her father; I have done every thing in my power to comfort her, but all

to no purpose ; perhaps, my dear, continued he, you may meet with better success ; saying this, he made a low bow, and left the room.

Lady Mary was several times about to confess her crime to her friend, and never to see her more ; but then the uneasiness it must naturally produce in her, join'd to the shame she must be in at such a recital, made her determine to bury it in oblivion.

Mrs. M. had a soul capable of the most sincere and permanent friendship : she had long observed the growing passion, as will be seen in the sequel ; tho' her good sense and prudence forbad her to take notice of it. She adored her husband, and she loved her friend : she saw the strugglings of her soul, and with a truly compassionate heart, contributed every thing in her power, to relieve the agonies which she found her in.

C

Tho'

Tho' she put on the appearance of gaiety, yet inwardly her heart was torn with contending passions ; she wept, but it was in secret, and the unhappy lady Mary never suspected that her friend had observed any thing in her behaviour, upon which she could ground any suspicions. Mr. M. behaved to his lady with the same respect and civility which he had ever shewn her, which would have made any woman, less observant than herself, perfectly satisfied. Mr. M. was fearful of what his lady might think of the situation in which she found him, so that he behaved to lady Mary with great circumspection ; while she, as if conscious of her crime, never look'd on Mrs. M. without a blush : thus was every heart tortur'd with contending passions, when a fortunate accident arrived to put lady Mary in a way to overcome her love, which was no other than a repeal of the earl
of

of R's banishment. She received this news with a double portion of joy ; first, for the pleasure of seeing a father, whom she could barely remember, and likewise to try what effect absence, joined to her own virtue and philosophy, could do to remove this destructive passion from her breast.

Mrs. M. parted with her with extreme regret, notwithstanding the uneasiness her presence had occasion'd. Lady Mary burst into tears at parting, and made what haste she could into the coach to hide her sensibility, lest her friend should impute the concern she was in, to something more than mere friendship. Mr. M, overcome with silent grief, gave her one passionate embrace, and followed with his eyes, a form whose idea would for ever remain in his heart.

Lady Mary had spent the summer with Mr. and Mrs. M, at their country seat about forty miles from town,

and was with them, on the news of her father's arrival in England.

The pleasure of seeing her father, the enjoyment of a town life, which was entirely new to her ; the dissipations which she purposely ran into, in hopes of forgetting Mr. M ; the novelty of these scenes for some time put every thing else out of her head, but when reason and reflection return'd, she found it was impossible to banish from her breast, the remembrance of a man so dear to her.

'Twas not possible for a person of lady Mary's figure and address to appear in public, without gaining admirers. Among the number who sued for her favours, lord F—seem'd most assiduous ; he was gay, agreeable, lively and witty. Lady Mary, who at any other time would have blush'd to have used any artifice, now encouraged his addresses, in hopes that it would afford her a relaxation from the uneasiness she was oppress'd with :

with : she constantly received letters from Mrs. M, in which she inform'd her, that she had fallen into a disorder, which her phyfician had denounced fatal, and had advifed her to try the well known efficacy of the Bath waters. Lady Mary was fhock'd beyond measure at this account, as ſhe looked upon herſelf as acceſſary to her diſorder, by her unhappy and criminal paſſion for Mr. M.

She answer'd her letters in the moſt tender and affectionate manner, repreſenting her extreme concern for her illneſs in terms of ſincereſt friendſhip. The ſoul of lady Mary was above diſſimulation, ſhe was really exceſſively grieved at her friend's illneſs ; ſhe had for her the moſt tender and lively friendſhip ; and hated herſelf for giving way to a paſſion, which could terminate in nothing but miſfortunes.

The continual anxiety which ſhe was in for Mrs. M's illneſs, join'd to
C 3 the

30 L O U I S A : Or,

the many anxious thoughts which intruded to her imagination, affected her health, she grew pale, abstract, and lifeless; not all the wit of the agreeable lord F— could raise her spirits, oppressed by despair and sorrow.

Her father, who loved her with a paternal fondness, sought every amusement in his power to dispel her languor; but alas! she had now no relish for company, every amusement was dull and insipid, and she found no relief but in acts of piety and devotion; every letter from her dear friend confirmed her disorder to be near its crisis, the last of which, without any apology, I shall lay before the reader. It was enclosed in one from Mr. M. in which was only these few words, My wife is dead! and I am the most miserable of mortals!

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Mrs. M. to lady MARY.

Bath, Oct. 14. 1734.

My dear lady Mary,

“ I Now approach to that period of
 “ life, which the good arrive at
 “ with pleasure, and the wicked are
 “ in such dread of; I mean the
 “ hour of death; which is to me a
 “ cause of triumph and rejoicing. I
 “ have nothing criminal to reproach
 “ myself with; my life has glided
 “ on in an uninterrupted series of
 “ purity, innocence and devotion.
 “ My pious mother early gave me a
 “ taste of it, and her own bright ex-
 “ ample I aim at; so that I am en-
 “ tirely resigned to the dispensations
 “ of providence.

“ Oh! my friend, let me not re-
 “ proach you as the cause of my un-

32 L O U I S A : Or,

“ timely end, it has pleased heaven
“ to release me from a world of sor-
“ row, and I obey without mur-
“ muring. The love and esteem
“ which I had for you, the entire
“ confidence in your virtue, made
“ me sufficiently easy : I loved ! nay
“ more, I adored my husband ! for-
“ give me, heaven, if I offend ! since
“ adoration is only due to the al-
“ mighty power. I never looked on
“ you both, but I saw the soft con-
“ fession in your eyes ; judge of my
“ grief by the excess of my passion !
“ could I be angry with the man I
“ so much loved ? with the friend I
“ so much esteemed ? Heart break-
“ ing circumstance !

“ I know you thought yourselves
“ secure, but alas ! my dear lady
“ Mary, tho’ my tongue was silent,
“ my heart was not, that murmured
“ at the partiality which the dear
“ man shewed in your favour. Why
“ are you so lovely ? and why is he
“ so

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 33

“ so agreeable? Oh! lady Mary,
“ the tortures my heart has suffered
“ are inexpressible: judge what a
“ wife, a loving wife must suffer! to
“ see him whom more than life she
“ loves, languishing for another;
“ and she her intimate friend, the
“ friend of her early years; it was
“ too much for a frail mortal to
“ bear: I pined inwardly, tho’ to
“ the world I appear’d gay and chear-
“ ful.

“ This dissimulation cost me dear;
“ for I found my health gradually
“ decay. My dear husband, -still in
“ appearance the same as when first I
“ knew him, tender, polite, and a-
“ greeable; with anxious concern
“ enquir’d of my health, and with a
“ tenderness resulting from esteem;
“ he insisted upon my having advice.
“ My physician advised the Bath
“ waters; but alas! my disorder is
“ incurable! my heart is touched in
“ its tenderest part!

“ Mr. M. with weeping eyes ask-
 “ ed me the other day, if I was per-
 “ fectly satisfied with his regard for
 “ me? I sigh’d and drop’d a silent
 “ tear; the sight affected him so,
 “ that he clasp’d me to his bosom,
 “ and beg’d of me, if I loved him,
 “ to satisfy his earnest request. I
 “ sigh’d and utter’d your name: the
 “ guilty youth trembled and turn’d
 “ pale, and then with tears in his
 “ eyes he confirmed the truth of my
 “ apprehensions; the dear, the ge-
 “ nerous man, wept at my feet, and
 “ beg’d my pardon in terms so plea-
 “ sing to my ears, that I could do
 “ no less than forgive him. I em-
 “ brac’d him, and in that happy si-
 “ tuation I fainted away thro’ excess
 “ of joy.

“ He constantly attends me with
 “ so much politeness, tenderness and
 “ assiduity, that give great relief to
 “ my anxious heart. I see, my dear
 “ lady Mary, his returning love with
 “ plea-

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 35

“ pleasure, and I shall die with the
“ satisfaction of knowing that I am
“ as dear to him as ever

“ My behaviour in every respect,
“ my taciturnity, he says, in such a
“ trying circumstance, is such an in-
“ stance of my greatness of soul, that
“ he can never enough admire it. I
“ beg’d of him, yesterday, to leave
“ me while a clergyman was attend-
“ ing to prepare me for the solemn
“ hour; when he left the room it
“ was like tearing a limb from me, I
“ could not endure his absence tho’
“ for a moment. I had him call’d
“ in again, and we join’d in the
“ prayers with such fervent devotion,
“ that I am persuaded it greatly edi-
“ fied the by-standers.

“ My dear lady Mary, let not
“ one thought enter your breast, that
“ I harbour any resentment against
“ you; no! I would scorn myself,
“ was I capable of any thing so
“ mean: that you may be happy is

36 L O U I S A : Or,

“ the sincere wish and prayer of her
“ who in her dying moments ef-
“ teems you. Farewel, my dear
“ lady Mary! and remember one
“ who never ceas'd to love you!—
“ Once more, farewel! for ever.”—

The receipt of this letter gave such a shock to the tender frame of lady Mary, already overcome with grief, that it threw her into a violent fit of illness. Which she was no sooner recover'd from, when as misfortunes seldom come alone, her father (who had such a paternal fondness for her) was taken suddenly ill of a violent fever, which, in spite of the utmost efforts of the physicians, carried him off. This was fresh grief to the already tortur'd mind of lady Mary, who sincerely loved him; and it was some time before she recover'd herself, to appear in company.

It was near six months after his decease before Mr. M. durst venture
to

to pay her a visit ; their meeting was melancholy on both sides : tears were the only conversation for some time, till at length the smothered flame which had been so long stifled, broke through all restraint, and in soft accents he first address'd his dear lady Mary, with moving complaints, tenderness, and love.

As soon as decency would permit they were married ; but heaven seem'd to frown upon this union ; for Mr. M. was snatched from her a few years after by an apoplectick fit : she had now occasion to exert all her philosophy ; she lost her husband, and with him all her joy.

Her brother, the earl of R. took her to his house, together with an infant daughter, for whose sake she suffer'd life. Lord F ——— renewed his addresses with the same fervency as before her marriage with Mr. M : but the many repeated denials which she gave him, made him at length
cease

cease to persecute his hopeless passion, he raised the siege; and levelled his batteries at another fort, which in the end, did not prove so impregnable.

Lady Mary M. made it her chief study to improve the infant mind of her daughter; nor were her pains thrown away upon a barren soil. No one was better calculated to go thro' the fatigue of education than lady Mary; she had seen a great deal of life, had a fine understanding, and had improved those talents which heaven had committed to her care; she followed the excellent plan of the great and ingenious Mr. Locke, and with so sensible a guide, she could not possibly err.

The small-pox, that cruel enemy to beauty, had made great depredations in miss M: yet the qualifications which she possess'd, render'd her an object worthy of the addresses of the baron de B. The day was
con-

concluded on for the marriage, and every thing settled which could compleat the happiness of a much loved daughter, and an affectionate mother : when lo ! heaven thought fit to snatch this blessing, this darling daughter from her arms. 'Tis impossible for me to give an adequate description of the agonies which seiz'd the breast of this tender mother ; all her boasted philosophy forsook her, and for a long time she gave herself up a prey to sorrow ; till reason and religion exerted their powerful influence over her heart.

Lady Mary had left her brother's house upon his marriage ; she was so angry with him, for joining himself with a woman, so much beneath his own rank in life, that she had never since convers'd with any of the family : but the great regard which she still retain'd for her brother, made her chearfully undertake the education of lady Louisa.

The

The young lady grew up with every accomplishment, requisite to adorn a person of her rank; she was affable, polite, and good-natur'd, which join'd to the beauties of her mind, made her deservedly the delight of every one.

Before the earl's death, her brother stood candidate for an ancient borough in the west; Sir Harry Owen strongly oppos'd him, and notwithstanding his lordship's interest, Sir Harry carried the election against him; which was such a provocation, that his lordship never could forget it.

'Twas here that Sir Harry first beheld the beautiful lady Louisa; love inspir'd him with the boldness to speak to her of his passion, and before the election was determin'd, he had the happiness of hearing her pronounce those enchanting words, I love! so quick a progress had this passion made in their hearts.

Things

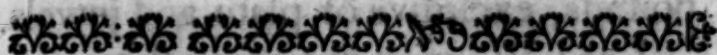
Things were in this situation when lady Louisa had the irreparable misfortune to lose her father, and in less than two months her aunt, Lady Mary M. expir'd in the arms of her niece; these misfortunes coming together, had lik'd to have prov'd fatal to the tender frame of the distress'd Louisa. Sir Harry took every opportunity to acquaint lady Louisa of the power that her charms had over him: they took great care that their mutual regard for each other, should be an utter secret from the earl, who took every occasion to asperse the character of Sir Harry; which he would have as warmly resent'd, if the regard which he had for Lady Louisa had not restrain'd him.

As this lady was entirely dependent upon her brother for a fortune, she knew it would be to no purpose for Sir Harry to solicit her in marriage, as the earl bore an inveterate hatred against him. Lady Louisa's tenderness
for

42 L O U I S A : Or,

for him was so great, that it made her incapable of denying him any thing ; it was in one of these interviews that the earl was witness to his sister's dishonour ; rage and shame overpower'd him so, that he was not able to utter a word, and being too great a coward to attack Sir Harry with honour, he was determin'd to take a desperate and bloody revenge in the manner which we have already shewn. Lord W. would have publish'd his cruelty to the world, but by the desire of lady Louisa he forbore ; she beg'd that he might be left to the stings of his own guilty conscience.

CHAP.



C H A P. V.

WE will now attend lord W. into Grosvenor-street, where Sir Harry resided. Upon his arrival he met a servant who inform'd him that he was that instant going for him, for his master had fainted away three times, and was at the point of death. Sir Harry had not strength to say any more, than to recommend his dear lady Louisa to his lordship's care, when he gave a great sigh and expir'd.

Lord W. after giving the necessary orders, went to inform lady Louisa of the death of Sir Harry. The title and estate went to the only son of Sir Harry's brother, an infant scarce two years old; so that all which he had in his power to leave to lady
 Louisa

Louisa was about nine thousand pounds, exclusive of plate and jewels.

Lord W. with the greatest tenderness and circumspection broke the affair to lady Louisa. As it is impossible for me to give an adequate description of the grief which seiz'd this lovely lady; suffice it to say, that she never left her apartment for three months, when her roses were fled, and left in their room a death-like paleness; but her delicacy remain'd in spite of her grief.

Lord W. had from his first acquaintance with the charming lady Louisa esteem'd her, esteem grew into friendship, and friendship soon ripen'd into the most ardent and respectful love; he griev'd to see her bloom vanish, and her health decay: he inform'd her of his love, and beg'd her, if possible, to forget Sir Harry, and make him happy, by bestowing her hand on one who ador'd her more than life itself.

Lady

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 45

Lady Louisa answer'd him only by a flood of tears ; at length she inform'd him, her cheeks overspread at the same time with a crimson blush, that she fear'd, that she carried within her a fatal proof of her love for Sir Harry : this rather encreas'd his tenderness for the lovely unfortunate ; he assur'd her, that his passion was as respectful as possible, and that rather than give her the least uneasiness, he would smother it in his bosom, and never suffer it to appear, tho' at the hazard of his life. He then beg'd of her to go with him into the country, where she would not be liable to any further affronts from the earl ; to this she readily assented, and the week following they set out for the seat of lord W ; they had not been long here, before his lordship fell into a high fever, occasion'd by his love for lady Louisa ; the smother'd flame at length broke out, and burn'd with redoubled force : his physicians did
all

all in their power to save his life, but all their medicines would have prov'd ineffectual, had not a kind regard shot from the eyes of the lovely Louisa, he must inevitably have sunk under a weight of sorrow.

She could not suffer her friend, her benefactor (not to mention him in a still kinder light) to die for her; she was determin'd to seem pleas'd with his passion, till he had regain'd his health; she was then in hopes that resistance join'd to his own virtue and nobleness of soul, would be a means of overcoming his love for her; for she was fully resolv'd never to accept of any future addresses.

Lord W. seeing the anxious concern of lady Louisa, how carefully she attended him, never leaving the room, but administering his medicines with her own hand; tho' she herself was in a very bad way, wanting but two months of her time: he entreated her to leave him to the care
of

of his servants, and not endanger her own precious life, by so strict an attendance upon him; but she was determin'd not to leave him till he was out of danger.

Lord W. began to mend daily, pleas'd with the assiduity and tenderness of lady Louisa, whom he fondly imagin'd was actuated by a mutual regard, not thinking that friendship alone could excite in her so much compassion: pleas'd, I say, with her kind behaviour, he was soon in a capacity to leave his chamber. How did he pour forth the fond wishes of his heart; he breath'd out his amorous passion in terms expressive of his love, pressing her lovely hand to his inraptur'd lips, and thanking her in the warmest terms, for restoring him to life and love; he watched her looks, and examin'd every feature, but alas! her eyes spoke not a language that he could have wish'd; no melting tenderness appear'd there; no dying

ing accents hung upon her tongue ; her lovely eyes clouded in sorrow, pour'd forth their tribute of tears. Lady Louisa beg'd him to retire, for she found herself ill ; in short, her continual fatigue in attending lord W. brought on her pains, and in the evening, by the assistance of a skilful midwife, she was deliver'd of a lovely girl, which ended the life of the unfortunate mother ; she had only time to breath a short prayer to heaven for the protection of her babe, then begging lord W. to take care of the smiling infant, she gave a piteous groan and expir'd.

Lord W. seeing the lovely lady Louisa no longer breathe, fell on her corpse and fainted : it would be as unnecessary, as impossible for me to describe the agonies and despair that for a long time overwhelm'd this worthy man ; for a series of years, the idea of lady Louisa was continually in his mind ; her daughter, who
was

was the exact resemblance of her unfortunate mother, still cherish'd the sad remembrance. He brought Louisa to town with him (for he had call'd her after her mother) he spar'd for no cost to render her mind as beautiful as her person, neither was it thrown away upon her, for before that she was twelve years old, she could converse familiarly in the French and Italian, and she had likewise a smattering in the languages, she having a nervous understanding, and a strength of genius beyond her years; as to her female accomplishments of music and dancing, with the long train of etceteras which come under that denomination, no one excelled her.

Lord W. was extremely happy to think that his lovely charge had every requisite to adorn a female mind; her sentiments were noble, virtuous and charming; he pleas'd

D

show him

himself with the hopes of seeing her dispos'd of before his death ; but alas ! he grew weaker daily : his concern for lady Louisa, had prey'd upon his spirits, and worn him to a shadow : finding his end approach, he sent for Mr. Worthy, the gentleman who was mention'd in a preceding chapter, as a person properly qualified to undertake the care of lady Louisa. He then made his will, wherein he left Louisa fix thousand pounds, which join'd to what her mother had left, made up her fortune fifteen thousand pounds, exclusive of plate and jewels. Louisa could not hide her concern, at seeing her friend languid and pale, giving himself up a prey to grief ; he died a few months after, leaving her to the care of Mr. Worthy. Louisa was a sincere mourner for lord W. as she was sensible that in him she had lost the best friend that she had in the world.

She

She was now remov'd to the house of Mr. Traffic Worthy, in Broad-street buildings; he was the younger son of a Kentish baronet of small fortune, who brought him up in a merchant's compting-house, where in an honest way he had accumulated an immense fortune; he having an extensive trade in the European colonies, together with a large fortune, he received with his wife, who after bringing him six children, left him a disconsolate widower, at the age of forty: he had the misfortune to bury all his children except one son, for whose sake he was determin'd to remain single.

This young gentleman's disposition was entirely different from his good father's; he had been guilty of such extravagancies, that had given the old gentleman great uneasiness: at the time of Louisa coming into the family, young Worthy was prosecu-

52 L O U I S A : Or,

ting his studies at Cambridge, under the auspices of that reverend and worthy divine Dr. S ——. Mr. Worthy himself was at this time not very short of his grand climacteric; he had a sweetness of temper uncommon to men of his years; he received her in the most tender and affectionate manner; informing her that he thought himself supremely happy in the guardianship of so lovely a young lady. Louisa blush'd, and made no other reply than desiring that she might be shew'd to her apartment, where she gave vent to a flood of tears; the melancholy catastrophe of her unhappy father and mother, join'd to the recent death of her good friend lord W. all conspir'd to render her a prey to the most poignant sorrow.

CHAP.



C H A P. VI.

MR. Worthy did every thing in his power to dispel the melancholy of his lovely ward. Mariana, the niece of this good old gentleman, by her mirth, sprightliness, and good humour, in a great measure overcame her grief. Mariana was the daughter of Mr. Worthy's third brother, who in the South-sea scheme lost the greatest part of his fortune, which afflicted him to that degree, that it broke his heart. As Mariana was left destitute, her good uncle took her into his house; where she had the management of the family, after the death of Mrs. Worthy. Her person was genteel, her features regular, her complexion tolerable, a
D 3 pretty

pretty mouth, a fine set of teeth, and a pair of sparkling black eyes full of fire and vivacity; and tho' not a striking figure, was yet excessively agreeable.

Louisa at this time was about eighteen, was rather above the common size of woman; she inclin'd to a plumpness, which added to her striking figure, gave her a look of such dignity, which at first might be deem'd pride; but her excessive affability and good nature, shew'd how ill she deserv'd that epithet: her eyes were soft, yet full of fire; her complexion of a dazzling whiteness, her mouth and teeth inimitably charming: she had an infinite share of wit and good sense, join'd to a temper which few things could ruffle; in short, both in person and mind, she was a most enchanting creature.

Louisa

Louisa soon found that the agreeable Mariana was worthy of her esteem, and they enter'd into a strict and sincere friendship, which lasted to the end of their lives. Mariana inform'd her friend, that she had a lover in the person of Mr. Glover, the only son of Sir Hugh Glover, knight and alderman; that her uncle was a warm advocate for him, he being a young man of good fortune, and excellent principles. Well, my dear, cry'd Louisa, after the account which you have given me, I hope you give him proper encouragement, considering that your uncle authorises his proceedings. Not I, truly, cry'd Mariana: I give the fellow no encouragement; he is too solemn a lover for me. I love a smart clever whip syllabub lover, that will compliment the charms of your person, no matter whether he means any thing or not; call you angel!

goddess! and a thousand pretty names; for flattery is so agreeable a food, and of so light and easy a digestion, that believe me, my dear, we all love to taste of it. Indeed Mariana, said Louisa, I think flattery so very absurd, that I should believe a man paid no compliment to my sense, whatever he did to my person. If I was so handsome as you, my dear, I should think myself deserving of every thing a man could say to me. But poor Glover is so stupid, that I am never half an hour in his company, without having the yawns; and sometimes, I e'en fall asleep. You have seen the man, he is well enough as to person, but, hang him, he will never make any thing of me; besides, we have had a dreadful quarrel, and upon your account. Upon my account, cry'd Louisa, I should be extremely sorry indeed, my dear, to be the

VIR TUE in DISTRESS. 57

the occasion of any quarrel between you. A mere trifle, child, answer'd Mariana; you must know, when you left the parlour the other day, he enquir'd who you were, saying, that you were the finest woman that he ever saw in his life; now this being flat treachery against me, the lady of his affections, I blush'd; the wretch smiled, as if he thought that I was jealous of you; so to complete his impertinence, he ran on in your praise for near half an hour; and tho' I was inwardly pleas'd to hear him speak well of you, yet I abus'd you most vehemently: indeed, my dear, if you had heard how I rail'd at you, you would never forgive me. He then thought me angry in good earnest; so up jump'd my gentleman from his chair, flounced upon his marrowbones, ask'd my pardon, and would have retracted every thing he had said in your behalf; which pro-

58 L O U I S A: Or,

vok'd me so, that I told him you were so good, that there was not a man living deserving of you: so looking as glum upon him as I could, I commanded him never to see my face any more; then giving the train of my negligée its full circumference, I sweep'd off with the dignity of a queen in a tragedy, leaving the poor creature upon his knees, admiring the dignity of my person and figure.

Ha! ha! ha! indeed my dear, said Louisa, tho' I cannot help laughing at your lively manner, yet I cannot by any means approve of your behaviour, and must insist upon it, that when he comes again, you make some concessions, as I really think him deserving of your esteem.

Indeed, my dear, I did not intend to give the man a dismissal, tho' I fear he has taken me at my word; for I never was in better humour in
all

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 59

all my life, and was disposed to be a little merry, that's all; and really I should have laugh'd at him, if I had not been afraid that it would have taken from the dignity which I had assum'd; but it grows late, so pleasant dreams attend my dear Louisa. Good night, you wicked girl. Well, cry'd Mariana, I will go and do penance for my wickedness, in being absent from you, and dreaming of that odious man Glover.

The next day, when the ladies had dined and were preparing for the opera, who should enter but Mr. Glover, with a respectful bow. Mariana made him a low curtesy, and sat playing with her fan; the poor man look'd silly: Louisa, after some time, broke the solemn silence, by saying you are come very opportunely, Mr. Glover; Miss Worthy and myself are for the opera to-night, and we shall be glad of the favour of

60 L O U I S A : Or,

your company. Bless me, miss Owen, cry'd Mariana, I wonder you would ask Mr. Glover, when I know he is engag'd. Indeed, madam, answer'd he, I am not; as I never think myself so happy, as when I have an opportunity to attend Miss Worthy. Very fine, truly Sir, cry'd she; I suppose now that you will expect some fine compliment, but you will find yourself mistaken; however, if miss Owen is so compassionate as to admit you into our society, I have no objection. Mr. Glover colour'd, and return'd no answer but by a low bow. How the creature looks, cry'd Mariana; why don't you come and kiss my hand, and thank me for my condescension? He immediately ran to her, and kiss'd her hand with a becoming fervor: a truce, a truce, cry'd she; I believe the man has a mind to devour my hand. Come let it go, and tell me what in the name
of

VIRTUE IN DISTRESS. 61

of wonder can have made you neglect paying your devoirs to me for so many days? Bless me, madam, cry'd he, a little nettled, was it not by your own order? Well, Sir, and pray who sent for you now? The poor man look'd quite confounded.

Come miss Worthy, cry'd Louisa, mention it no more, and shew Mr. Glover that you have so much good nature as not to give him the least uneasiness. Look'ee, Sir, it is entirely owing to the interposition of this lady, that my easy temper is wrought upon to forgive you; but pray for the future give me no cause of complaint against you: saying this, she flew to the bell, and order'd tea and coffee. I love coffee, cry'd Mariana; 'tis a most agreeable beverage, and I always sip it with the air of a politician.

After they had put an end to their tea, they set out for the Haymarket, where

where, with my reader's leave, I shall beg permission to attend them, being a great admirer of Italian musick, and enchanted with the harmonious voices of Mattai and Potenza.

CHAP. VII.

LOUISA and her friends had not been long seated, before a gentleman in a green ribbon was particular in his behaviour to Louisa; he entertain'd her, during the performance, with all the foppery he could assume; nor could Louisa get rid of him, tho' she tried every way in her power to do it; he handed her to the coach, and with a profound bow took his leave.

As soon as they were seated, so my dear, said Mariana, I could lay my

VIRGIL IN DISTRESS. 63

my life that you have got an admirer in that jointed baby in the green ribbon ; his lordship looks for all the world like an aukward girl in boys cloaths. Yes, cry'd Louisa, laughing, I believe I have made a conquest ; tho' I should scarcely think it possible for him to admire any thing but himself ; for I assure you, my own charms were not so much the subject of his discourse, as the elegance of his dress and person, his true French embroidery, his fine brilliant, and every other article of his dress. A very pretty entertainment truly, cry'd Glover, for a young lady of your refin'd sentiments ; but really I am very sorry to say that we have so many of these fine gentlemen in the age we live in, that we are as much over-run with them, as we are with our polite neighbours the French, who transmit over to us their ridiculous follies and fashions ;
the

64 LOUI SA: Or,

the complying with which, makes us
so much despis'd.

Your observation is very just, answer'd Louisa, and yet there are men in the world who think it beneath the dignity of their sex to comply with the ridiculous modes and follies of the time. I need go no further than yourself, Sir, to prove the truth of my assertion. You do me a great deal of honour, madam, answer'd Mr. Glover bowing, in forming so good an opinion of me, the cultivation of which will afford me the greatest satisfaction.

Heigh ho! interrupted Mariana gaping, you will send me to sleep with your gravity; for these ten minutes I have not been able to hedge in a word, which you know is a great mortification to one, who loves talking so well as I do. I protest, Louisa, you will make the man vain if you continue to praise him so, for
I am

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 65

I am sure he thinks himself —— at least deserving of every thing you was so kind as to say in his favour. Mr. Glover was prevented from returning an answer, by the coach stopping at the door. They found Mr. Worthy waiting supper for them, with his usual politeness and good-breeding.

After supper he inform'd them that he expected Ned Worthy from Cambridge the week following; that he had finish'd his studies, and was going to make the grand tour.

After the ladies were retir'd, Louisa ask'd Mariana, what sort of a young gentleman her cousin was? As agreeable a rake perhaps, my dear, as ever you set your eyes on; full of wit, smartness, and repartee; but a dangerous companion, he makes attempts upon every petticoat that comes in his way; I'd have you, my dear, guard the avenue to your heart, for he can put on the most specious

specious appearance to deceive. The last time he was in town he made an attack upon me, not that I believe he lik'd me; but finding his time hang heavy on his hands, he took it into his head to make love to me for a little amusement; but finding that I was not to be gain'd without a ring and a priest, he grew tir'd of the pursuit, and very cavalierly gave me the slip; for he dreads the sight of a priest as much as he would that of a halter. He then entertain'd a penchant for a girl, whom I hear has not been so prudent; since which time we have been barely lukewarm in our regards for each other: nay, he had the insolence to be offended at some liberties which I bestow'd on the sedate Mr. Glover, which provok'd me so, that I immediately enter'd into articles with him to have and to hold, and all that old fashion'd stuff. So, my dear, next week

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 67

week I must beg of you to assist me with your judgment in the choice of my cloaths, which the creature beg'd might be of such a sort, as might intimate his regard for me, and with great good-nature presented me with a bank note for five hundred pounds, which action of his pleas'd me so much, that I thought that I must e'en reward him with a kiss; but instead of being contented with one, which I told him was the utmost I could possibly allow him, he had the insolence to take a score, which exasperated me in such a manner, that I hit him a box of the ear; and he, without considering the nature of his offence, very complaisantly return'd it; at the same time watching my eyes to see how I took it. I could not forbear laughing at the oddity of his figure, which pleas'd him so much, that he kiss'd me again; so fearing that he would renew his imperti-

pertinence, I very civilly turn'd him out of the room.

I begin to grow very sleepy, and I have seen so many pretty fellows to night, that I shall dream of nothing else but gilt chariots, fine cloaths, and wigs *en aile de pigeon*: for your part, my dear Louisa, your beau in buskins, with his green ribbon, will be sufficient to employ your waking thoughts till the morning. She then wish'd her a good night, and left her to her own meditations.

In the morning before Louisa was risen, Mariana came into her chamber. Bless me, cry'd she, instead of dreaming of the pretty fellows I told you of last night, my mind ran on nothing else but Glover. Methought I was sitting in a pensive posture, when he came running in, and wish'd me joy; telling me that he was to be the next lord-mayor; at which I laugh'd so immoderately, that

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 69

that it wak'd me: so you see, my dear, I shall come to dignity at last, my lady mayorefs! What an idea I have of the dignity of that envied title? But come, my dear Louisa, get up this moment, or else positively you shant' have a morsel of breakfast.

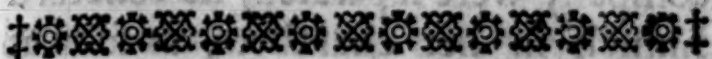
In the afternoon Mr. Worthy inform'd Louisa, that he had receiv'd a visit from lord A. who had been smitten with her at the opera; he agrees to settle his whole fortune entirely at your disposal. I told him, madam, continued Mr. Worthy, that I could give him no answer till I had consulted you. Mariana burst out a laughing; I told you, my dear, that you would be pester'd with the suit of your green bird: I thought his lordship cast a sheep's eye at you, but come, my dear, don't be cast down, but pluck up your spirits, and tell my uncle your resolution. My resolution

70 L O U I S A : Or,

tion is this, answer'd Louisa, that I never more desire to see his face; which if you, Sir, will inform him of in a genteel manner, I shall be much oblig'd to you.

Things were in this situation on the arrival of young Worthy, when the face of affairs were greatly changed. The charms of Louisa instantly captivated him; nor is it to be wonder'd at, that so lovely a girl as Louisa should charm a young fellow, whose heart like tinder could be set in a flame by a single puff. Her dignity of appearance at first awed him, join'd to a behaviour which she had purposely assum'd, upon being inform'd of his character, but at length that timidity wore off, by being more acquainted with her; and he besieg'd her heart with an uncommon assiduity. Louisa could not behold a man so capable of pleasing as young Worthy, without confessing to Mariana, that

that were it not for his libertine principles, he were not unworthy of any womans regard.



C H A P. VIII.

THIS was the posture of affairs, when the day arriv'd that made Mr. Glover happy in the lively and agreeable miss Worthy; he gave a dance upon the occasion, and Ned Worthy had the happiness of being partner to Louisa: this day also gave Worthy the satisfaction of hearing from Louisa, that he was not disagreeable to her; embolden'd by this confession, he attempted some small liberties, but her behaviour awed him and made him desist. But he had drank the bride's health so often, that her frowns had very little effect on him; and being heated with wine, he

72 LOUISA: Or,

he was determin'd some way or other to come to the enjoyment of her person; for this purpose, when the company were separated, he conceal'd himself in her chamber; as soon as the destin'd victim was in bed, he came from his concealment.

Louisa scream'd upon hearing some person in her chamber, when he immediately stop'd her mouth, and insisted upon being admitted to her embraces; she struggled with all her force, and struck him a box on the ear: this smart rebuff made him desist, upon promise that she would not expose him; and hearing some person at the door, he retir'd through the closet, and went down the back stairs.

Louisa open'd the door, and found that it was her servant, who ask'd her the occasion of her screaming. Louisa was in great confusion, but told her that she had a frightful dream,

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 73

which occasion'd her screams. She fearful of any further attempt, desir'd the maid to stay with her the remainder of the night, and for the future to lay in the adjoining closet.

The agitations of her mind would not suffer her to enjoy any rest: in the morning she receiv'd a penitential letter from Worthy, informing her, that he was under great concern for his late behaviour, that it was entirely owing to his being in liquor; and concluded, with desiring that she would not expose him to his father, and for the future he would never be wanting in his respects to her. She was some time before she could come to a determination, whether she should not acquaint Mr. Worthy with his behaviour; but the uneasiness it must necessarily create in the old gentleman's breast, and recollecting at the same time that young Worthy would go abroad in a few weeks,

E

she

she thought proper to take no notice of it.

Ned Worthy was so perfect a master of dissimulation, and he appear'd under such concern for his vile attempt, that she really concluded it was entirely owing to his being in liquor, but was resolv'd not to give him any future opportunity to insult her.

A few days before the departure of young Worthy, Mr. Glover sent Louisa and Worthy a pair of tickets for Mrs. Cibber's benefit, and that they would call upon them to go in Mr. Worthy's coach. After the play Mrs. Glover inform'd Louisa that she expected her own chariot, for Glover and she were engag'd to spend the evening in Pall-mall. This was a great disappointment to Louisa, as she was not over fond of going home with young Worthy alone; but that detestable wretch knowing of Mrs. Glo-

Glover's supping from home, had given the servants a crown to drink, to be out of the way.

Louisa now found that she was under an absolute necessity to put herself under the care of young Worthy. He sent for a hackney-coach, and order'd the man to drive to a noted tavern. Louisa did not perceive where she was going too, till they stop'd at the tavern-door; she frighten'd, demanded of him for what purpose he had brought her there, insisting, that if he did not let her go home, that she would alarm the neighbourhood. Your screaming now, madam, will be of little consequence, for the good people are too polite to interrupt any gentleman in his pleasures; he then took her by the hand, and insisted on her walking in and drinking a glass of wine. She burst into tears, and vow'd never to set a foot within

those doors, unless by compulsion; he then call'd one of the waiters to take her out, which he attempting to do she fainted away, and in that condition was carried into the house; when she came to herself, the first object that she saw was young Worthy on his knees. She intreated him, her eyes swimming in tears, to release her. But he exulting in triumph, no, madam, not all the powers on earth shall make me desist; I have been at infinite trouble, madam, to get you here, and nothing now shall disappoint me: he then remov'd her handkerchief, and proceeded to some indecencies. She scream'd, and defended herself with all the strength that she was mistress of; he then stopp'd her mouth, and taking her in his arms, threw her upon the bed; in the struggle she got the handkerchief out of her mouth, and scream'd as loud as possible,

sible, which brought some people to the door, who immediately broke it open. Worthy drew his sword, and swore if any offer'd to molest him he would run him through. Louisa beg'd that they would deliver her out of the power of that wretch; but judge her confusion, when she observ'd one of them to be lord A. her opera gallant. I esteem myself happy, my dear miss Owen, after being cruelly refused by you, to be in some measure an instrument of your deliverance. For heavens sake, my lord, cry'd she, see me safe out of this infernal mansion: he gave her his hand, and led her to his chariot, which was waiting for him at the door, and drove directly for Broad-street buildings, leaving young Worthy briskly engag'd with another gentleman.

Louisa then inform'd lord A. of young Worthy's base attempt on her;

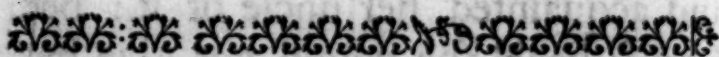
78 L O U I S A : Or,

but intreated him, if he had the least value for her reputation never to mention it, which he promis'd he never would, but beg'd she would permit him to visit her ; which considering the obligations she was under to him, she assented to: he took leave of her, after seeing her safe under her guardian's hospitable roof. As soon as she got up stairs, she found herself extremely ill; she told her servant that the house was excessively hot ; that Mr. Worthy's servants not being in the way, she was oblig'd to accept of lord A's polite offer of his chariot: her fright, her confusion, her joy for her providential escape, together with her hurry of spirits, threw her into a violent fever.

In the morning she sent for Mrs. Glover, and inform'd her of both the attempts that her wicked cousin had made against her virtue. Mrs. Glover was thunderstruck at this recital, and

and would immediately have gone and acquainted her uncle of it : but Louisa beg'd she would not give her guardian the least uneasiness, as the recital of his son's baseness must necessarily give him ; and hearing that the wretch was to set out the next day, she was determin'd to take no notice of it.

The clashing of swords had brought some people out of an adjoining apartment, and made up the fray between the two combatants, but not before Worthy had receiv'd a small scratch, which however prov'd of no consequence to retard his journey. He set off the next day, after taking leave of his father, and leaving his respects for Louisa ; who still continued out of order ; but the thoughts of her tormentor being now at a distance, soon restor'd her to health and spirits.



CHAP. IX.

ABOUT a fortnight after the departure of young Worthy, her guardian was oblig'd to go into the country for a few days, for which reason Louisa went to reside at Mrs. Glover's. It happen'd one day, when Mr. Glover and his lady were gone to spend the day with a relation at Fulham, that Louisa receiv'd a letter from her guardian, intreating her to set out immediately for Canterbury; that he was there taken extremely ill, and had some papers to give her of the utmost consequence: without the least hesitation she pack'd up a few necessaries, leaving the letter for Mrs. Glover, and set out with her maid in a post chaise under the guidance of the

the fellow who brought the letter; they drove all day, and about dusk he told them, that they must be oblig'd to cross a ferry before they could arrive at Canterbury. The fellow then put them into a boat, and row'd to a small vessel which lay at some distance; he told her that the river was so rapid, that it was dangerous to venture over in so small a boat: she not suspecting any plot against her went aboard, and was shewn with her servant into a large cabbin, and the vessel was immediately under sail: she was greatly astonish'd, and enquir'd when she should arrive at the opposite shore; but what was her amazement when young Worthy enter'd the cabbin, she scream'd and upbraided him with his treachery: she need not now be told that it was a scheme to get her from the power of her guardian, and look'd upon herself as the most wretched of all

82 L O U I S A: Or,

human beings, to find herself once more in the power of so vile a wretch.

Forgive, my dear miss Owen, this new attempt on you; 'tis a seduction which at present may appear disagreeable, but I am in hopes that time, joined to the assiduities of the most tender and respectful man upon earth, may make you change your sentiments; he then would have took her hand, which she refused him with the utmost disdain.

Sir, cry'd she, however cruel fortune may have placed my person in your power, it has given you none over my mind; I detest the baseness of your principles, and will sooner die than suffer you to proceed with your wicked intentions. My dear Louisa, answered he, why this dissembling? this is not proper language for a lover; has not that charming mouth confess'd that you love

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 53

love me? and why then are my principles any objection? since every thing else proves agreeable to you. Your principles, my dear Louisa, continued he, are as odious to me, I hate prudery; 'tis your person that I love; come thou softest, kindest, loveliest of thy sex, throw aside your cruelty, and do not refuse me a satisfaction, which remember is now once more in my power to force from you: but I had rather receive it with your own consent, since that will heighten the satisfaction, and give new lustre to those lovely eyes; then frown no more, and smiling tell me you are ready to crown my happiness.

Louisa burst into tears; the man who dare take any advantage from the weakness of our sex, is a monster devoid of every principle of goodness. Well, madam, as our sentiments in this affair are so very

84 L O U I S A : Or,

different, we are not likely to come to any terms ; so I will leave you at present to your own thoughts : perhaps night, the lover's friend, may make you more compliant to my wishes ; if not, force shall yield me the possession of your person, which I would wish to gain by gentler means : but since with such obstinacy you refuse to gratify the unbounded wishes of my heart, remember the fault will be then your own.

Every body here, madam, are entirely at your command ; they have my strict orders to attend on you with the greatest diligence : name but your wants, and they shall be instantly supplied, even I, madam, am the lowest of your slaves, and most devoted to your service. Order me then, Sir, instantly to be put ashore, from the power of one whom I despise : you are mistaken, Sir, if you flattered your vanity so much, as to
ima-

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 85

imagine it was your person I esteem-
ed. No ! it was your behaviour that
pleas'd me, nor am I ashamed to
confess it ; and had that continued to
correspond, you would have been as
agreeable as ever ; but since you have
thrown off the mask, and appear'd
in your native colours, I abhor, de-
test, and despise you ! and since my
power extends so far, let me have in-
stant liberty.

Any command but this, madam,
shall be obeyed. I have not taken
so much pains to get you in my pow-
er, to part with you so soon ; I am
not one of those weak puny mortals,
that are to be frighten'd with high
founding words ; for when my reso-
lution is once fixed, the whole world
cannot change it : besides, my dear,
you take the worst method in the
world to bring me to your lure ; I
must be sooth'd, indulged, and flat-
ter'd into compliance : permit to be
happy

36 LOUISA: Or,

happy with you this night, and I swear to you, if you desire your liberty in the morning, it shall not be denied you.

How low and mean, cry'd Louisa, has this outrage sunk you in my opinion; it degrades the man to use indecent language to a person of my sex, who has the misfortune to be in his power: I am oblig'd to hear you, but not oblig'd to answer; and since you have dar'd to offend my ears, I insist upon your leaving my apartment, nor presume to enter, till you have made an atonement for your presumption and ill-manners.

Even your haughtiness, madam, cry'd Worthy, is agreeable to me; every proposition that comes from Louisa, does not come in vain. I obey you, madam, and would with the same readiness lay down my life, to convince you of the sincerity of my passion; in saying this he retir'd,
and

VIRTUE IN DISTRESS. 878

and left Louisa oppress'd with despair and grief.

She order'd Jenny to go to him, and to enquire where he was going to carry her. His answer was, that he was going to carry her with him into France, that such an agreeable companion in his travels, was the only thing on earth he could desire; that being disappointed of her person at the tavern, by the intrusion of some insolent fellows; he would now use the power of a conqueror, and take by force what she was determin'd not to give by any other means.

Louisa did nothing but weep and implore heaven to assist her. Jenny then inform'd her, that Mr. Worthy had offer'd her twenty guineas to suffer him to be hid in the cabin; but that she would sooner die, than consent to his base purposes. Louisa was somewhat comforted to find her
servant

servant honest, and in this assurance she fell into a sound sleep; the fatigues which she had undergone insensibly over-powering her. Jenny was appointed to stand centinel, to prevent any surprize. About twelve o'clock the enemy approach'd, and with the most soothing blandishments strove to gain admittance, but the trusty girl would not open the door; at length he grew so outrageous, that he attempted to break it open. Jenny then thought it time to awake Louisa, who return'd her many thanks, and promis'd, if she liv'd, never to forget her kindness; in less than five minutes the door yielded to so potent an adversary.

Louisa stood ready to receive him, having snatch'd a sword that hung up in the cabbin : he gave way upon seeing her arm'd in this manner, her eyes striking indignant fire. Wretch, cry'd she, presume not further ! for if

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 89

you dare to touch me, this sword shall find a passage to thy heart! think not that my sexes timidity can restrain me, for I am determin'd to preserve my honour, tho' at the hazard of my life.

Worthy not thinking that she had resolution enough to strike, rush'd upon her; but before he had time to wrest the weapon from her hand, she wounded him in the fleshy part of his arm; the agitations of her mind were so violent, that she fainted. Worthy left her to the care of Jenny, and retir'd to have his wound examin'd, which bled excessively, but the bleeding being staunch'd, one dressing compleated the cure.

Whilst Louisa was in a fainting condition, they cast anchor on the coast of France; he order'd one of his servants to procure a post chaise and able horses to be ready the moment that they landed. Louisa continued

90 L O U I S A : Or,

tinued still in a fit ; nor did she come to herself, till the motion of the chaise brought her from this state of insensibility. She enquir'd where she was, and what was his further designs against her ; that she was so ill, that she did not think it possible for her to live much longer, not having tasted any thing since her leaving London. To all this he made no other answer than by kissing her hand, and complaining of her cruelty to one who had taken so much pains on her account : thus did this abandon'd wretch make a merit of his villainess.

Louisa did nothing but weep at the cruelty of her fate : when day appear'd, he would have drawn up the canvas, lest any one should take particular notice of her, but she intreated him to let them be down, for that the heat overcame her. To oblige her he complied, though with reluctance.

luctance. She let several people pass without taking any notice ; but soon after observing a young gentleman of a most graceful appearance in a chaise, attended by four servants, she was determin'd to beg his assistance, she scream'd out for help ; the gentleman immediately jump'd from his chaise with his sword drawn, and demand-ed the occasion of her screaming. Louisa beg'd him, for heavens sake, to release her from a base wretch, who sought her ruin : the young gentleman directly open'd the door, and took her in his arms, at the same time evading a blow that young Worthy aim'd at him ; he order'd one of his servants to place the two ladies in his chaise, while he maintain'd the pass with Worthy, who, though an excellent swordsman, found that he was not able to cope with his antagonist, who at the third pass laid him at his feet : the servants seeing their master

92 L O U I S A : Or,

master in that condition, thought proper to retire till the coast was clear.

The generous unknown order'd the post-boy to drive forward, and mounting one of the horses, they were quickly out of sight. He order'd them to stop at the first inn that they came to, that the lady might have some refreshment, which she stood in great need of.

C H A P. X.

NEXT morning they pursued their journey for Paris, where they arrived in the evening. Louisa was all the way pouring out her gratitude to her benefactor for his timely assistance ; she wanted much to know who he was, and he likewise was actuated by the same impatience
to

to know by what misfortune such a lovely young creature, came to be in the power of such a wretch.

Upon their arrival at Paris, he carried her to the Hôtel of madame du Bourg, a lady of distinction, and one of his most intimate acquaintance. Bless me, Sir George! cry'd the lady, return'd so soon! and in company with so lovely a young lady! He then inform'd her how he came by that happiness, and beg'd she would take the lady under her protection. Very willingly, cry'd madame du Bourg, there is something in her countenance which pleads in her behalf: Monsieur du Bourg, and myself, madam, continued she, will do every thing in our power to render your stay with us as agreeable as possible. Then turning to Sir George, I hope, cry'd she, you don't intend to leave us? Louisa expected his answer with great impatience. No, madam,

madam, cry'd he; I can't think of leaving you, while so agreeable an attraction remains in your house as this lady, in whose affairs, continued he, bowing to Louisa, I find myself greatly interested. Louisa blush'd, and return'd no answer; but giving her hand to madame du Bourg, she return'd her thanks for the generous concern which she had shewn for a poor unhappy girl, betray'd from her guardian by a villain; and but for the kind interposition of this gentleman, I had been the most miserable of all human beings.

Monseigneur and madame Du Bourg, were a most agreeable and charming couple; by the looks of the lady, no one would have have imagin'd her to have been more than five and twenty, and yet she was considerably turn'd of thirty. Monsieur du Bourg was between forty and fifty, a genteel well-bred man, and so fond of his

his wife, that it might be said that he was never truly happy but when in her company.

One day as Louisa was discoursing with her deliverer, she beg'd of him to inform her to whom she was oblig'd. Madam, cry'd he, Sir George Owen will always think himself happy, in being accessary to the deliverance of a young lady so very agreeable as yourself. Sir George Owen ! cry'd she, turning pale. Yes, madam ! returned he ; but why should my name give you any uneasiness ? If it offends you, madam, call me by any other ? Answer me, Sir George ! what relation are you to the late Sir Harry Owen ? His nephew, madam ; his brother's son ; but why this enquiry ? 'Tis as I suspected ! cry'd she. Just Heaven ! how wonderful are all thy ways ! Perhaps, Sir, continued Louisa, you are unacquainted with the affairs of Sir Harry ; I was not
more

more than two years old, madam, when my uncle died; I have been since inform'd that he was murder'd, at the instigation, 'tis believ'd, of the earl of R. whose sister lady Louisa M. he at that time courted. That lady, answer'd Louisa, left a daughter. A daughter, madam! cry'd Sir George, in amazement! I am, Sir, the unhappy daughter of the unfortunate lady Louisa! and, from what I have said, you may easily conjecture to whom I am indebted for my birth. My cousin! cry'd he; it must be so! you are, and must be such! my heart own'd you for a relation, before your lips confirm'd it! Oh! would you but make me happy, by a nearer relationship! Louisa blush'd, but could return no answer. You make me no answer, madam; I fear I have said too much: then taking her hand, and pressing it to his lips, let me intreat you to relieve me
from

from this anxiety. I am so astonish'd, answer'd Louisa, at this surprising adventure, and confus'd at owning myself the daughter of Sir Harry Owen, that I am at a loss for a reply; but this know, that I am more happy in being oblig'd to Sir George Owen, than I should to any other man in the world. She blush'd, thinking that she had said too much, and immediately retir'd, leaving Sir George highly delighted with the answer she had made him.

Sir George Owen was a most accomplish'd young gentleman, had seen a great deal of life, and was every way form'd to render any woman happy; from the first moment, Louisa had made an impresson on his heart; her confusion and distress, gave her such a soft languishing air, that it added to her natural beauty.

F

Not

Not being happy enough to know the sentiments of Louisa on this occasion, I must remain silent, tho' I believe I may venture to assure my readers, that she was at that time as much smitten as Sir George.

As her mind was now perfectly at ease, she thought it time to give an account of her situation to her dear friend Mrs. Glover.

MISS OWEN to MRS. GLOVER.

Paris, April 16, 1755.

" I Am at length, my dear Mrs.
 " Glover, after innumerable fa-
 " tiques and hardships, arriv'd at
 " this pleasurable metropolis, by the
 " contrivance of that vilest of men
 " Mr.

“ Mr. Worthy ; thinking myself
 “ happy and free from insult under
 “ your kind and hospitable roof,
 “ and believing that the destroyer of
 “ my peace was at too great a distance
 “ to molest me any more, I gave
 “ myself up to the pleasing thoughts
 “ of an uninterrupted series of inno-
 “ cent mirth and pleasure, with you
 “ and your worthy husband ; but
 “ alas ! my dear Mariana, how were
 “ all my schemes render’d abortive
 “ by that cruel letter.

“ Your uncle having papers of
 “ great consequence of mine in his
 “ hands, made me determine imme-
 “ diately to wait upon him accord-
 “ ing to his desire, without consider-
 “ ing the absurdity of the attempt.
 “ You can be no stranger to the
 “ vile forgery dictated by the wretch
 “ who trepann’d me from you and
 “ my worthy guardian. We travell’d
 “ ’till dusk ; Jenny and I, in com-

“pany with the person who was to
 “conduct us; he inform’d me, that
 “we must be oblig’d to cross a
 “large rapid river, by the assistance
 “of a ferry, before we could arrive
 “at Canterbury; and as both my-
 “self and Jenny were entirely igno-
 “rant of the situation of the place,
 “we follow’d him without the least
 “hesitation.

“In this manner, my dear, was
 “I betray’d on board a small vessel,
 “which was directly under sail, and
 “the first object that struck my
 “sight, was Worthy: judge of my
 “confusion and astonishment. I was
 “determin’d sooner to lose my life,
 “than that only valuable gem a fe-
 “male can possess. I fasten’d the
 “cabin-door, and my faithful Jenny
 “stood guard; while I, fatigued, fell
 “into a guiltless slumber; which
 “was soon disturb’d by the approach
 “of the barbarous ruffian, who,
 upon

“ upon being refus’d entrance,
 “ threaten’d to break open the
 “ door ; Jenny immediately awaked
 “ me, for I had only laid down in
 “ my cloaths, not daring to undress
 “ for fear of a surprize. I snatch’d
 “ up a sword that hung in the
 “ cabin ; and, thus prepar’d, I
 “ waited his entrance, resolving to
 “ stab him to the heart, if he of-
 “ fer’d the least indecency.

“ The door soon gave way to the
 “ repeated attacks of this furious
 “ monster, who saw me arm’d with
 “ such a determin’d air (for I be-
 “ lieve I look’d like a fury). Wretch!
 “ cry’d I, if you dare come within
 “ my reach, dread the rage of an
 “ offended woman ! But he, not
 “ thinking me so resolute, clos’d
 “ with me : my strength not being
 “ equal to my resolution, I only
 “ slightly wounded him : the sight
 “ of his own blood only made him

“ more desperate ; and, notwith-
 “ standing my own struggles, join’d
 “ to the screams of Jenny, I should
 “ most certainly have been over-
 “ power’d, for my spirits forsook
 “ me, and I fainted away ; if, at
 “ that instant, one of his servants
 “ had not come to inform him
 “ that they had cast anchor : he or-
 “ der’d him immediately ashore to
 “ get a post-chaise, and I was put
 “ into the boat in that condition ;
 “ nor did I come to myself, ’till the
 “ motion of the chaise had rous’d
 “ me. I found that we were in a
 “ public road, and was not without
 “ some small hopes of making my
 “ escape : for this purpose I com-
 “ pos’d my countenance, stifled my
 “ anguish, and appear’d, considering
 “ my circumstances, tolerably gay :
 “ this behaviour of mine pleas’d him
 “ extremely.

“ As

“ As soon as the morning ap-
 “ pear’d, he would have drawn up
 “ the blinds, to prevent any one
 “ taking notice of me ; but I beg’d
 “ he would let them be down, or
 “ the heat would certainly overcome
 “ me ; which motion he compli-
 “ ed with, tho’ with great reluct-
 “ ance.

“ Several equipages past us with-
 “ out my attempting to call out, not
 “ observing any thing in their looks
 “ which promis’d me assistance ; but
 “ towards noon I observ’d a young
 “ gentleman, attended by four ser-
 “ vants : there appear’d such a plea-
 “ sing sweetness in his looks, that I
 “ was determin’d not to let such an
 “ opportunity slip ; I immediately
 “ scream’d, and beg’d for Heaven’s
 “ sake that he would relieve me :
 “ he jump’d out, drew his sword,
 “ and ask’d what occasion I had for
 “ his assistance ? To be releas’d from

" a villain, cry'd I: He then open'd
 " the door, and I jump'd into his
 " arms. Worthy made a pass at
 " him, but luckily miss'd him: my
 " defender then order'd one of his
 " servants to place me and Jenny in
 " his chaise; he then defended him-
 " self against the attacks of Worthy,
 " who, finding himself robb'd of his
 " prey, fought like an enrag'd lion;
 " but was happily overcome, and
 " left bleeding on the ground: we
 " left the place immediately, and,
 " after a necessary refreshment on
 " the road, we arriv'd at Paris,
 " greatly fatigued. My defender
 " carried me to the hotél of one
 " monsieur du Bourg, a gentleman
 " of distinction and fortune: his
 " lady and himself are the most
 " agreeable people in the world;
 " they have been so obliging as to
 " carry me to see every thing this
 " great city affords; and sure no
 " place

“ place in the world is capable of
 “ affording so much amusement to
 “ strangers, as Paris.

“ I come now, my dear Mrs.
 “ Glover, to speak more particular-
 “ ly of my generous deliverer: judge
 “ of my astonishment, when he
 “ prov'd to be Sir George Owen,
 “ nephew to Sir Harry: I found
 “ my colour leave me on this disco-
 “ very, which he tenderly ask'd the
 “ meaning of, fearing that I was ill.
 “ I then told him, my cheeks co-
 “ ver'd with blushes, the whole of
 “ my unhappy story. As soon as
 “ I had finish'd it, he took an op-
 “ portunity to inform me of the
 “ regard which from the first mo-
 “ ment which he had seen me, had
 “ taken too deep root in his heart
 “ ever to be effac'd: I blush'd, and
 “ look'd confus'd; but the answer
 “ which I return'd him, was not of
 “ a nature to make him despair; in

“ short, my dear Mrs. Glover, not
 “ to hide it from you, I confess my
 “ amiable cousin has a powerful ad-
 “ vocate in my heart; nor need I
 “ blush at this confession; since he
 “ is not unworthy of my regard.

“ Judge of my happiness then,
 “ my dear Mrs. Glover; caress’d by
 “ madam du Bourg, and lov’d by
 “ Sir George, with a mind entirely
 “ at ease, unless now and then a
 “ thought of Worthy breaks in and
 “ disturbs my tranquility; for if he
 “ should be living, I have every
 “ thing to fear from a man who has
 “ lost all sense of honour. Madame
 “ du Bourg has promis’d to favour
 “ me with her correspondence, in
 “ whatever part of the world chance
 “ may throw me, as I intend to stay
 “ no longer here than ’till I have the
 “ pleasure of hearing from you;
 “ tho’ I am greatly press’d to stay ’till
 “ the latter end of the year; but I
 “ don’t

“ don’t think myself safe on this
 “ side of the water.

“ Sir George took an opportunity
 “ the other day, to bring me to an
 “ eclaircissement, when I could not
 “ help confessing to him the power
 “ which he had over me: he was
 “ ravish’d with my confession, and
 “ beg’d that I would appoint a time
 “ that he might receive the honour
 “ of my hand at the altar, to put it
 “ out of Worthy’s power to molest
 “ me any more. I told him that it
 “ was my desire it should be de-
 “ ferr’d ’till our arrival at London,
 “ and that I had an agreeable female
 “ friend, who had made me pro-
 “ mise that she should be at the ce-
 “ ceremony of my wedding: he
 “ smil’d, and reluctantly complied
 “ with my request, but is now as
 “ impatient for our departure, as
 “ myself.

“ I would write to my dear guar-
 “ dian ; but as I can say nothing to
 “ him that can be any ways plea-
 “ sing, I think it will be more pru-
 “ dent to decline it. Pray make my
 “ respects to him, and, notwith-
 “ standing the behaviour of his son,
 “ that he will ever hold a place in
 “ my esteem.

“ Believe me, my dear Mrs. Glo-
 “ ver, that a letter from you can be
 “ the only possible addition to the
 “ happiness of

Your sincere

And affectionate

L. OWEN.



C H A P. XI.

Mrs. GLOVER to Miss OWEN.

London, May 15, 1755.

“ **H**OW happy, my dear Louisa,
“ did your obliging letter make
“ me, after being so unhappy as to
“ lose you near three weeks; upon
“ reading the vile letter which you
“ left, my mind foreboded some
“ dreadful accident: I dispatch’d
“ William to Broad-street Buildings,
“ to know when they expected my
“ uncle: he brought word that he
“ would be in town by dinner the
“ next day. Glover perceiv’d that
“ something had vex’d me, and en-
“ quir’d the reason of my concern:
“ I shew’d

110 LOUISA: Or,

“ I shew'd him the letter, and gave
“ him an account of the former at-
“ tempts which Worthy had made
“ against you; the poor soul was
“ greatly provok'd at his insolence,
“ and ask'd me what was the best
“ course to take; but as our conjec-
“ tures amounted only to a supposi-
“ tion, we had nothing to do but to
“ remain in a state of uncertainty,
“ till the arrival of my uncle.

“ The next day I waited on him,
“ and shewing him the letter, he
“ was greatly surpriz'd, and as-
“ sur'd me that he had not wrote it;
“ he was under great concern on
“ your account, loving you as ten-
“ derly as if you was his own child.
“ He ask'd me, if my suspicions did
“ not fall upon the earl of A? I
“ told him that he was too respectful
“ a lover to be guilty of so much
“ baseness; I did not think proper
“ to inform on whom my suspicion
“ fell,

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 111

“ fell, as it must necessarily create
“ him a great deal of uneasiness; we
“ made all possible enquiry, but
“ could not gain the least tidings of
“ you. In short, my dear Louisa, I
“ have never had a merry feature
“ since you left us; I forswore even
“ my dear quadrille, and never durst
“ come near a looking-glass, lest I
“ should be frighten’d at the gravity
“ of my countenance.

“ When Will brought me your
“ packet, I believe the fellow thought
“ I was mad. I frisk’d about the
“ room, and play’d so many antick
“ tricks, that I am persuaded that
“ my brain was out of order. I had
“ scarcely ran it thro’ before spouse
“ came from change. I gave him
“ your letter, which, when he had
“ read through, he could not for-
“ bear dropping a tear; what does
“ the fool cry for, said I, are you
“ concern’d that my dear miss Owen
“ is

112 L O U I S A : Or,

“ is safe ? He look'd confounded at
“ my rebuke : Now, my dear, ob-
“ serve my generosity, thinking that
“ I had wrong'd him, I took hold
“ of his hand, and beg'd his par-
“ don. Are you not surpriz'd at my
“ condescension ? He took me in
“ his arms, and I verily thought he
“ would have stifled me : in short,
“ the poor soul was so pleas'd at your
“ safety, that he wanted words to ex-
“ press himself : he would have gone
“ immediately and shown the letter
“ to my uncle ; but I ringing the
“ bell, and ordering my things, told
“ him that he must not presume to
“ encroach on my province ; that I
“ being the wiser of the two, it lay
“ upon me to communicate the af-
“ fair to him : he made me no other
“ answer than bowing to the very
“ ground. 'Tis impossible to express my
“ uncle's astonishment upon reading
“ your

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 113

“ your letter. I could not avoid
“ telling him of the two former at-
“ tempts which he had made on
“ you : the good old man cry’d hear-
“ tily, which affected me so, that
“ notwithstanding my gaiety, I join’d
“ my tears with his, and we howled
“ in concert.

“ I am quite in love with Sir
“ George ; bless me, my dear ! who
“ could have imagin’d that in the
“ person of your deliverer, you had
“ found a relation and a lover ! such
“ a lover as most of our sex would
“ chuse.

“ Glover’s cousins, the miss
“ Sprightly’s, are come to town, but
“ sure such a couple of aukward
“ girls was never seen, they look as
“ if they had been litter’d in a hog-
“ sty ; they are fine girls, and I hope
“ by that time we have the pleasure
“ of seeing you, I shall have made
“ them as clever as myself ; for at

114 LOUISA: Or,

“ present they are in behaviour not
“ unlike the wild Irish.

“ Pray make my respects to mon-
“ sieur and madame du Bourg, and
“ tell them, that I long to sputter a
“ little French with them, should
“ they ever take a trip to the Eng-
“ lish shore, or we take a frolick to
“ the French one. I shall be but
“ half alive, till I have the happi-
“ ness of meeting my second self in
“ your person. Glover begs his re-
“ spects, with those of

Your sincerest,

M. GLOVER.

Mr.

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 115

Mr. TRAFFIC WORTHY to
Miss OWEN.

London, May 15. 1755.

MADAM,

“ THE concern I am under for
“ the base attempts that my
“ son has made on you, is needless for
“ me to express; but the news of
“ your safety under the auspices of
“ the worthy family you are at pre-
“ sent with, in some measure alle-
“ viates my grief. May heaven
“ shower down its choicest blessings
“ on the head of your deliverer,
“ whose just praise is echoed from
“ every mouth; I wish to God that
“ Ned’s sentiments were the same.
“ The uneasiness which this affair
“ has cost me, has given me a dis-
“ order which I fear will not termi-
“ nate but in my death; which I
“ hope

116 L O U I S A : Or,

" hope will not happen, till I have
" the honour of kissing your hand,
" and assuring you how much

I am,

Dear MADAM,

Your sincere friend,

and humble servant,

TRAFFIC WORTHY.

When Louisa had received these letters, she would have left France immediately, but madame du Bourg prest her to stay with her some time longer, in so polite a manner, that Louisa could not, without being guilty of great ill manners, refuse her.

As Sir George and miss Owen were one day in conversation, she beg'd of him to relate his story, having

ing often heard madame du Bourg mention his being unhappy in his youth. My history, madam, answer'd Sir George, affords so little variety, that I cannot flatter myself it will give you any entertainment; but since it is your desire, I obey with pleasure; Louisa bowed, and Sir George began his narrative in the following terms.

The history of Sir GEORGE OWEN.

It was in my eighteenth year, the most unhappy period of my life, that I fell desperately in love with miss S—, a young lady who lived in our neighbourhood, and who used frequently to visit my guardian's daughters: join'd to the most amiable figure in the world, she had a soul capable of acting every crime which the human heart can give into; but had the art to disguise her real sentiments

ments from me in such a manner, that I profess I thought myself the most happy man in the world in being able to gain the heart of a lady, whose sentiments appear'd so very agreeable : but the sequel will shew how much not only I, but the whole world were deceived, by this specious appearance of virtue and goodness.

As her only fortune depended upon the whims and caprice of an old grandmother, I found no great difficulty in gaining her consent to a union, which I was vain enough to flatter myself would not terminate but with death.

Our marriage was celebrated with surprizing magnificence, which was by her own desire, and was the first thing which gave me a suspicion that love had but a small place in her heart; for she seem'd blinded by ambition and grandeur. For the first six months of our marriage I scarce
ever

ever saw her, she being so busily employed in shewing the world the magnificence of her equipage and dress.

I represented to her in as tender a manner as I was able, that her behaviour was not in the least consistent either with her character, or the sincere love which she could not be ignorant I had for her. She answered me with a haughtiness which I thought very ill became her, and I could not help resenting her behaviour in a manner perhaps rather too severe.

From this time we had separate apartments, and tho' I behaved to her with the greatest politeness, still foolishly fond of her lovely form: yet all my concessions could never meet with any other returns, than what were dictated by malice and ill-nature.

I had

I had for some time great reason to suspect that she dishonoured my bed: a young fellow, who was journeyman to a person who dealt in the millenary and haberdashery way, came three or four times a week to my house, and staid so long with my lady, that gave the servants a suspicion that he came upon other business than that of selling his goods; this I accidentally heard them whisper among themselves: fired with this report, I made a strict enquiry concerning his character, and learnt, to my utter grief and confusion, that he had the vanity to declare in publick company, his intimacy with lady Owen. 'Tis needless for me to enter into a detail of the agonies my mind suffered, since they will be easier felt than described.



C H A P. XII.

THE author of my wrongs was in too low a class of life, to suffer any thing from my revenge, and to receive any other satisfaction than what every man of honour requires, would only have exposed me to the censure of the publick, without being of any service.

I flew home to satisfy my vengeance on her, who was the cause of all my shame; I found that she was in her own chamber: when I came to the door, I was stopt from entrance by the sound of her voice in close consultation with her chambermaid; curiosity determin'd me to listen; their voices at first were so very low, that I could not hear any thing distinctly;

G

stinctly ; till at length they spoke so loud, that without the least difficulty, I could make out their conference : judge my astonishment, when I heard my wife propose the diabolical scheme of taking me off by poison. I found that her servant had more honesty than herself, for notwithstanding all her promises, she could not incline the girl to consent.

If curiosity detain'd me before, surprize now fixed my feet to their station, and it was some time before I was capable of the least reflection. I went into her room with an air of indifference, and informed her, in as calm a manner as my rage would permit, of the conversation which I had overheard, and of the intelligence which I had received of her criminal correspondence with the fellow who so often attended her.

Without being in the least disconcerted, she told me (with an air of im-

impudence, which had I not been an eye witness of, I could not have believed she could have assumed) that I deserved to be unhappy, if I gave any credit to the malicious reports of the world; and that ever since she had been married, she had, to the utmost of her power, performed all the duties of a wife, with so much decency and regularity, as must confute any unjust aspersions against her conduct; and that as to the conversation which I had pretended to have overheard, it must be owing to some jealous whim, or a desire to get rid of her, which she affirm'd had been the case almost ever since our marriage. She then appeal'd to her servant, if they had any such conversation; notwithstanding the fear the girl was in, from the known violence of her lady's temper, she only blush'd, but return'd her no answer.

Sir, continued she, since you have dared to dispute my honour, 'tis not fit I should remain with you any longer, therefore make me a proper allowance, and I never desire to see your face any more.

I was greatly rejoiced, thus to get rid of a woman so void of evry principle of goodness ; and that the proposition came from herself, I confess was an addition to my satisfaction, since I believe I could not have brought myself to propose our parting.

She, if one may form any judgment by appearance, was greatly disappointed in her scheme ; for she believed me to be so foolishly fond of her, that I should never be able to bring myself to bear a separation ; but herein she was mistaken.

I allowed her with pleasure the jointure which I had settled upon her on our marriage ; and she left me the
next

next day, murmuring at the scantiness of my allowance: her ingratitude shock'd me, and I determin'd never to see her face any more. 'Twas not long before the world understood the reason of our separation, for she behaved with so much indecency with her gallant in publick, whom she had taken from behind the counter, and maintain'd like a gentleman: that he was extravagant to the last degree, gaming and dress being the prevailing passions of his heart. Her allowance, had she been frugal, might have maintained her with great decency; but the extravagance of her gallant soon made her contract very large debts.

The wretch was so vile, that notwithstanding her fondness for him, he gave her an ill disorder; and after forcing her to take up a large sum of money, he went off with it, together with her cloaths and jewels, in

concert with the maid whom he had been long in love with.

The moment I heard of her illness, and the distress she was in, I went and relieved her, and order'd a surgeon to attend her. She recover'd, but at the expence of her beauty ; but this not being sufficient warning for her, she fell into new excesses, which in a little time brought the poor unhappy woman to her grave:

Thus, my dear miss Owen, was my mind relieved from the grief, which since I had known her, had continually preyed upon my spirits. After discharging the debts which she had contracted during our separation, and settling my own affairs, I thought it better to leave England, till time had obliterated the remembrance of my misfortunes.

I came over to France, where I first became acquainted with mon-
sieur

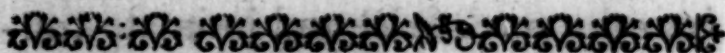
fieur and madame du Bourg: I then proceeded for Italy, where, after a stay of nine months, and making many useful observations, I return'd once more to Paris, where I enter'd into the most strict and intimate connexions with this worthy couple; they have been a balm to my wounded mind, having never since I left England, till I had the good fortune to relieve you, met with any thing that could afford me the least joy.

Louisa bowed in return for his compliment, and thank'd him for the trouble which he had given himself, in relating his adventures to her.

One day as Louisa was in madame du Bourg's dressing-room, she took notice of a small miniature picture, that greatly resembled her. She enquir'd for whom it was drawn? for a sister of mine, answer'd madame du Bourg sighing, whose history I

128 L O U I S A : Or,

will acquaint you with. She was going to begin her narrative, when the dinner-bell ringing, she was obliged to defer it till the afternoon.



C H A P. XIII.

AFTER dinner they gave orders not to be disturb'd; when madame du Bourg enter'd upon the history of her sister in the following manner.

The history of mademoiselle de
PIERRE-FORT.

Monfieur de Pierre-Fort was a man of great distinction, and large fortune; he married a young lady, whose beauty and family were the only advantages she could boast of.

One

One son, the lady whose picture you took notice of, and myself, were the only offspring of their loves: I had scarce seen light when my mother died. Mademoiselle, my sister, was several years older than I, and of an age to manage the affairs of the family, being very handsome, and having a good fortune in her own disposal. She was address'd by a great number of gentlemen of distinguish'd rank, who would have thought themselves happy, had she honour'd them with her regard; but her heart was entirely averse to their proposals, and my father, who sincerely lov'd her, would not press her to marry contrary to her own approbation.

One night when slumber had closed the finest eyes in the world, she fancied herself in a pleasant grove, such as the poets represent elysian; a perpetual verdure dock'd the ground, and the whole face of nature ap-

130 L O U I S A: Or,

peared gay and chearful: the little aerial warblers made the groves echo with their melodious notes, and the gentle zephyrs play'd upon the crystal rivulets. She was enchanted with the appearance of every thing about her; and feasting her senses with the profusion of sweets where-with she was surrounded: when at a distance she observ'd a man of noble stature, and most magnificently dress'd, who approach'd her with a smiling air; the upper part of his face seem'd disguis'd under a small Venetian mask: he made love to her for some time in dumb shew; but not caring to remove his mask, she was determin'd to do it herself, having a strange curiosity to know if the face answer'd the rest of the person: she had no sooner taken it off, than he drew a dagger, and stabb'd her to the heart. She shriek'd out and awak'd in a violent fright: the servant hearing

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 131

hearing her scream, came running into the room. She inform'd her what a frightful dream she had that instant awak'd from : the idea of the person still haunted her ; and whatever resolution she made to forget the lovely figure, she found it all to no purpose, his form still return'd with double force, till at length it affected her health ; nor was it in the power of the faculty to remove her settled melancholy.

Is it possible, would she cry, to find a more wretched creature than myself ? I love a phantom ! a creature form'd by the vapors of a disturb'd imagination ! and yet, tho' I know my folly, I cannot overcome it ! More than six months pass'd away in this manner, when one evening as she was taking the air at her chamber-window, she saw a gentleman enter the street in a travelling dress ; but how great was her astonishment,

nishment, when she perceiv'd that he had the very air of her fancied lover : but when he approach'd nearer, she observed the same features of the person of whom she dream'd ; he made her a profound bow as he pass'd, which she had not power to return, her confusion was so great ; she look'd after him, and found that he enter'd a Hôtel a small distance from my father's, by which she guess'd him to be the marquis de S. Porcin, brother to a young lady whom she was very intimate with ; whose brother she knew was daily expected from Spain, nor was she mistaken.

Mademoiselle de S. Porcin sent the next day to desire her company : at this interview the marquis was wounded by a glance from the piercing eyes of Pierre-Fort ; he, by the good offices of his sister, revealed his passion, and had a favourable hearing ;

ing; in short, they soon came to a right understanding with each other, and enter'd into a solemn contract of matrimony.

Mademoiselle de Brionde, a young lady of beauty and fortune, was desperately in love with the marquis; he had formerly a passion for her, and had continued a correspondence with her, while he was in Spain; but the love which he had conceiv'd for my sister, had quite obliterated the thought of mademoiselle de Brionde. This young lady sent him several letters and messages to appoint a meeting, which he always punctually obey'd, but behaved to her with such a distant coolness, that stung her to the heart; by the help of her maid, who had an intrigue with one of the marquis's footmen, she came to know of the whole progress of his amour with my sister. The thoughts of so powerful a rival as made-

mademoiselle de Pierre-Fort exasperated her to such a degree, that she was determin'd to be reveng'd; for this purpose she wrote a letter to my father, acquainting him that his daughter carried on a criminal correspondence with the marquis de S. Porcin. This vile malicious scrawl threw my father into a great rage. He immediately acquainted my brother with the whole affair, and they came to the resolution of chastising the marquis, for the affront which they supposed he had put upon the family. He was so unlucky as to have an appointment that very evening to entertain my sister at her window, which he used frequently to do; he had not been there a very little time, before my father and brother rush'd out upon him with their swords drawn: by the light of the moon, which at that time shone very bright, he discover'd the persons who

at-

attack'd him : he would have avoided encountering with persons so nearly allied to the object of his wishes, had not my brother branded him with the ignominious titles of villain and coward, these epithets provok'd him so, that he drew his sword, and at the first pass laid my unhappy brother dead at his feet. My father seeing his son fall, had no power to revenge his death, but knelt down and embraced him in his arms, uttering the most piteous groans, and exclaiming against his murderer.

The marquis made the best of his way home, where taking some money and jewels, he made his escape, knowing how strict the edict was against duelling; and notwithstanding the deceased was the first aggressor, yet knowing that our family were very powerful, he thought it most prudent to leave the kingdom.

My

My sister, who from her window saw the situation of the parties, and observing her brother to fall, fainted into the arms of her servant, who had been drawn thither by her cries: she continued all night in agonies not to be express'd. After the funeral of my brother, my father, after severely upbraiding her for her conduct, sent her into a neighbouring convent, where she had not been above six months, before she heard the melancholy news of the marquis, being bound for England, being attack'd by pirates, and died in defending his liberty: the report of this news threw her into a fit of illness, which she did not recover from for a great length of time.

When her year was expired, hearing nothing to contradict the report of the marquis's death, she took the veil, resolving to dedicate the remainder of her unhappy life to the service

service of heaven: but alas! all her endeavours to banish his dear idea from her mind were ineffectual.

One morning as she was distributing alms at the grate, she observ'd a man in rags to eye her much; but keeping unobserved till she had given the rest, and none left but him, she put forth her hand to give him alms, when she found it gently seiz'd: upon this she lift up her eyes, and in the person of the beggar she beheld her dear marquis: fear and joy came over her heart with so strong a tide, that she screamed and fainted. The marquis was in great confusion, lest any of the nuns should have heard her scream; but happily for them both, they being all employed in their different avocations, she was not heard. When she came to herself, she desir'd him to be there next morning, when she should be more compos'd, and fitter to listen to his account,

138 LOUISA: Or,

account, lest her long stay should give any suspicion: he kiss'd her hand, which she held through the grate, and retir'd, promising to be there the next morning.

My poor sister spent the remainder of the day in grief and lamentation; she found that all her boasted religion could not preserve her from the ardent desire which she still retained for her beloved marquis.

Here a summons to supper prevented madame du Bourg from finishing her interesting narration.

CHAP.



C H A P. XIV.

The Conclusion of the History of Mademoiselle de Pierre-Fort.

THE marquis did not fail being at the grate the next morning; he told mademoiselle de Pierre-Fort, that after seeing her brother drop, he thought of nothing but making his escape; and meeting an English ship in the port, I took a passage in her, having for a great while an ardent desire to see that famous island; but meeting a Barbary ship, we were determin'd to sell our lives dearly: I receiv'd five wounds, which, with the loss of blood, almost depriv'd me of life. Our ship was taken; but they perceiving me to be better dress'd than the rest, and observing
some

some small signs of life in me, they did not throw me overboard, like the rest of the crew, hoping to make me pay for my ransom.

I languish'd with my wounds for near two months after our arrival in Barbary; and, not caring to be known, I was determin'd not to solicit for my ransom, fearing, as I had been the unhappy cause of your brother's death, I could never hope to be happy with you: thus I drag'd on a life of misery for near twelve months; for my master believing me to be a person of consequence, and finding that I had not sent for my ransom, he used me with great inhumanity; 'till, tir'd out with his cruelty, I was determin'd by some means or other to contrive my escape; and by the assistance of two of my countrymen, we were so happy as to conclude our hazardous design; and, after innumerable fatigues, we
arrived

arrived safe in France. My first care, on my arrival, was to make enquiry after you; but judge my despair, when I was inform'd that, believing the report of my death, you had retir'd into a convent; and at the year's end, hearing nothing to contradict it, you had taken the veil: the sound of condemnation could not be more dreadful than this was to me; my strength forsook me, my eyes grew dim, and I fell lifeless on the ground: when I came to myself, it was only to endure new tortures: in short, for seven weeks I never left my bed; when, being determin'd to gain a sight of you, I disguis'd myself in the manner that you see, and my stratagem met its wish'd for success. Tears were the only answer my sister could make; but at length, gaining some degree of resolution, she beg'd of him to leave her to the quiet enjoyment of her vocation, and
not

142 L O U I S A : Or,

not attempt to disturb the felicity she at present enjoy'd; but alas! her eyes agreed so ill with her words, that he perceiv'd it. Why, madam, cry'd he, can you be so cruel? Is it possible for me to forget the remembrance of your charms, after suffering so many hardships for your sake? rather let us fly! let me break your bonds, and leave this hated place: we will go over to England, where we may spend the remainder of our days in peace.

My sister too easily came into this scheme, and promis'd to take the impression of the keys in wax: thus they parted, and met for several days successively. One fatal morning, as he was breathing out his vows of constancy to his dear Mademoiselle de Pierre-Fort, and enumerating the many pleasures they should enjoy in England; when, unluckily for them, my father enter'd; he heard his daughter's

daughter's voice, in warm discourse with a beggar, whom he presently knew to be the marquis de S. Porcin; my father was greatly astonish'd, believing him to be dead; he listen'd attentively, and heard the whole scheme for my sister's escape; he drew his sword, and rushing in with the fury of a madman; audacious villain, cry'd he, thou hast murder'd my son! dishonour'd my daughter! and wilt thou now make her break her vows to heaven! The marquis drew his sword, which he had conceal'd under his rags. I am neither a murderer nor a villain, answer'd he, nor can I attempt the life of a man whom my dearest mademoiselle de Pierre-Fort calls father; but the old gentleman push'd at him with such fury, that he wounded him in the side; the marquis then thought it time to defend himself; they exchange'd a few thrusts, when each

2

giving

144 L O U I S A : Or,

giving the other an unlucky wound, they both fell dead upon the spot: my poor sister scream'd for help; the nuns came running to her assistance, but not time enough to prevent the fatal blow; she fainted away on seeing her father and lover fall a victim to each other's fury: when she came to herself, she inform'd them of her unfortunate story, and expir'd the next day, raving mad.

Louisa could not hear of so sad a catastrophe, without joining her tears with those of Madame du Bourg: they had scarcely dried their eyes, when Sir George call'd upon them to take an airing; which we shall leave them to do, and turn our enquiries after Mr. Worthy, whom sometime ago we left desperately wounded.

AFTER

AFTER Sir George Owen had carried off Louisa, Worthy's servants came to his succour: he had lost a great quantity of blood, which had weaken'd him greatly: they convey'd him to the next town, where sending for a skilful surgeon, he was in less than a month able to walk abroad: as soon as he was able to sit his horse, he set off for Paris, where he imagin'd Louisa was gone; to his faithful agent whom he most confided in, he gave the charge of searching for her, resolving to keep himself conceal'd; lest, if he should be seen, it might render his future schemes abortive.

The fellow enquir'd over the whole city, but could not satisfy his curiosity, 'till one morning as he was passing by monsieur du Bourg's house, he saw Louisa at the window; at a cabaret in the neighbour-

H

hood,

hood, he got all the intelligence he could desire, and flew home to communicate his success to his master, who was so pleas'd with his industry that he handsomely rewarded him. Worthy then set about forming a scheme for conveying her away: he sent his servant to Rochel, to hire a vessel for Leghorn, to be ready in a fortnight, in which time he did not doubt but he should have Louisa in his power: when this point was secur'd, his next business was to gain intelligence when she went abroad, at a proper time for the execution of his project: this his servant came to the knowledge of, by scraping an acquaintance with one of monsieur du Bourg's people, who inform'd him that his mistress and miss Louisa, accompanied by Sir George, intended to be in the Thuilleries that evening. Worthy thought it the most lucky opportunity that could happen; he im-

immediately order'd a post-chaise, with relays of horses upon the road, least any accident should happen to retard his journey: every thing thus being settled, he waited impatiently for the dusk of the evening: at length the wish'd for moment came; he planted his emissaries in a bye street, to be in readiness: in less than half an hour, the coach which contain'd the better part of his soul was in view; he made up to it, order'd the fellow to stop, and open'd the coach door. Sir George drew his sword, imagining him to be a street-robber, and was determin'd to defend the ladies. Louisa, by the glimmering of the lamps, discern'd it to be Worthy: her astonishment and confusion was so great, that it depriv'd her of speech, and she fainted away: Worthy's chief agent then came, and took Louisa in his arms; and, notwithstanding the outcries of madame

148 L O U I S A : Or,

du Bourg, he plac'd her in the post-chaise, and drove off immediately, leaving his master to make good his ground against Sir George, who, seeing the charmer of his soul carried away, fought desperately; but Worthy taking the advantage of his heat, clos'd with him, and laid him at his feet. Worthy then mounting a horse, which one of his servants held, rode off. The servants were in such confusion, that they never thought of apprehending Worthy, but ran to the succour of Sir George, who lay bleeding on the ground.

Worthy soon overtook the chaise, and did all in his power to reconcile the lovely Louisa to her fate; but all his efforts were fruitless, sighs and tears were all the answer she could give him. Your grief, madam, cry'd he, can never bring the person to life whom you preferr'd to me. Detested wretch! cry'd she, is he dead! and dost

dost thou live to tell me so! Indeed, madam, answer'd Worthy, you wrong your own charms by this unnecessary grief. What if you have lost one lover? there is another still remaining, who prefers your love to every thing in the world? Wretch! profane not the sacred name of love, by such language! Love is too noble a passion for such a wretch as thee! but talk no more, lest I forget myself! forget the softness of my sex! and do a deed that will make thee shudder! Why, faith, madam, answer'd Worthy, with great calmness, you are in heroics; upon my soul, you would make an excellent actress; the very air, dignity, and gesture of an enrag'd queen in a tragedy; but come don't spoil your pretty face with crying, but prepare to receive my passion with smiles; this, continu'd he, is the third time that you have been in my power, and if

150 L O U I S A : Or,

I let you escape now, it will be my own fault ; the tears of women I despise ; you can call sighs and tears to your aid, as you can your swoonings ; but the man that is determin'd to succeed, ought to be proof against them all.

They travell'd all night, changing horses at every stage ; and early the next morning he put her aboard a ship ; the wind being fair, they unfurl'd their sails, and soon lost sight of land ; when so violent a storm arose, that the sailors expected every moment when the ship would sink ; every one was on their knees, supplicating the mercy of heaven ; even Worthy offer'd up a petition, perhaps for the first time ; all but Louisa were in terrors ; her great soul stood unmov'd at the dreadful scene which surrounded her, knowing that she should be released from her greatest enemy ; and since she had lost what
she

she held most dear on earth, she waited the sinking of the ship without a groan: the lightnings shone around; the rain and the winds almost drowned the shrill voice of the thunder; when the ship, giving a great crack, split in two. Worthy snatch'd Louisa up in his arms, but the waves soon separated them; the weight of her cloaths bore her up for some time against the dreadful billows; but they growing wet, she must inevitably have perish'd, had not the storm abated; when some fishermen on the Irish coast observing her distress, row'd to her assistance: she had taken in such a quantity of water, that render'd her quite insensible. Upon coming to herself, she perceiv'd that she was in a dirty hovel, with a good looking woman sitting on the bed waiting the return of her senses. Arrah, my dear shoul, cry'd the old woman, I thought you

H. 4.

had.

152 L O U I S A : Or,

had been dead ; Patrick and I were beginning to howl for your death. Louisa then ask'd the old woman where she was ; on the coast of Ireland, answer'd she ; and how came I there ? return'd Louisa ; upon my shoul, my dear joy, that is a very odd kind of a question ; you can better tell yourself how you came here, than I ; my son Patrick is a poor honest fisherman, and observing something to float after the storm, took you up and brought you home, where, thank God, with a little care, you are come to yourself.

Louisa return'd the good people many thanks for their kindness ; and, after staying with them 'till she had recruited her strength, she set forward for Dublin, after liberally rewarding the good nature and humanity of the honest fisherman and his mother. When she arriv'd at Dublin,

lin, the first thing she did was to write to Mrs. Glover.



CHAP. XV.

MISS OWEN to MRS. GLOVER.

Dublin, June 12, 1755.

“ STILL, my dear Mrs. Glover,
 “ is your Louisa the sport of
 “ cruel and adverse fortune: when
 “ I receiv’d your kind letter, my
 “ heart exulted with happiness; but
 “ alas! of how short a duration. I
 “ was destin’d to be unhappy, from
 “ the moment of my birth: could
 “ any one imagine that being so
 “ near happiness, that any event

H 5

could.

154 LOUIZA: Or,

“ could possibly happen to frustrate
“ it? bless’d in the company of a
“ friend, bless’d in the love of Sir
“ George; but why do I mention
“ his name! he, I fear, is no more;
“ lost his life, in defending that of
“ the wretched and unhappy Louisa!
“ Oh! Mrs. Glover, every thing
“ was settled for our return to Eng-
“ land; when one fatal night, Sir
“ George attended madam de Bourg
“ and myself to the Thuilleries,
“ when on our return the coach
“ was stop’d in a bye street. I con-
“ cluded that their designs were for
“ our money, so was not under any
“ great uneasiness; but judge my
“ despair, when I perceiv’d it was
“ Worthy. I gave a great cry; Sir
“ George bid me be under no con-
“ cern, and immediately jump’d out
“ of the coach: the agony I was in
“ for the life of Sir George, affected
“ me.

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 155

“ me so that I fainted away : what
“ follow’d, I am ignorant of ; but
“ when life return’d, I found myself
“ in a post-chaise ; my tears gave
“ me some relief, and I beg’d of
“ Heaven to release me out of the
“ power of such a villain.
“ Worthy was so inhuman, alas !
“ to inform me, that he had left Sir
“ George weltring in his blood :
“ words cannot describe the agonies
“ of my grief ; my misfortunes
“ seem’d now to have render’d me
“ insensible of every thing. I en-
“ quir’d to what part of the world
“ he intended to carry me. I have
“ a vessel waiting for us, which will
“ land us at Leghorn, where the
“ heat of the climate, I hope, will
“ thaw your icy heart ; and why,
“ my dear Louisa, continued he,
“ since I know you have no aversion
“ to me, should you give me such

156 L O U I S A : Or,

“ unnecessary trouble ; he then pro-
“ ceeded to take some liberties with
“ me, which I repulsed with dis-
“ dain : thus we travell’d, changing
“ horses at every stage, and early in
“ the morning we arriv’d at Rochel,
“ where he put me on board a ves-
“ sel ; my grief, for the loss of Sir
“ George, making me entirely pas-
“ sive to every thing : the wind was
“ fair, the sails were unfurl’d, and
“ we soon lost sight of land. We
“ had been but a few hours at sea,
“ when a violent storm arose ; the
“ motion of the ship, together with
“ the rolling of the waves, made
“ me so sick, that I verily thought I
“ should have dy’d, when Worthy
“ came in and inform’d me, that the
“ storm was so violent, that the ship
“ was in danger of being lost : ob-
“ serving me so ill, he snatch’d me
“ up in his arms, and carry’d me
“ upon

“ upon deck, where we had not
 “ been long before the ship split in
 “ the middle: my cloaths bore me
 “ up for some time, ’till they were
 “ so drench’d in water that they
 “ could no longer support me. I
 “ was entirely insensible, nor did I
 “ come to myself ’till some time af-
 “ ter, when I found myself on a
 “ dirty bed, with a decent old wo-
 “ man attending me. My brain was
 “ so confus’d, that I could not re-
 “ collect by what accident I could
 “ possibly be there: I ask’d the good
 “ woman where I was; she told me,
 “ at a small town in Ireland; that
 “ her son, who was a fisherman, ob-
 “ serving, after the storm, somewhat
 “ to float, he put off his boat and
 “ took me in; he concluded that I
 “ was dead, but after discharging a
 “ vast quantity of water, I shew’d
 “ some small signs of life; and that
 “ bring-

158 LOUISA: Or,

“ bringing me home, she had put
“ me into a warm bed; where,
“ thank God, cry’d the good crea-
“ ture, you are come to yourself.
“ I return’d her thanks for her kind-
“ nefs to me; and, after staying
“ with the good woman, and her
“ son, ’till I had regain’d my
“ strength and spirits, they got me
“ a conveyance for Dublin; and I
“ took leave of them, after reward-
“ ing them for their kindness to
“ me.

“ I lodge in the house of Mrs.
“ Ellis, in High-street, Dublin;
“ where please to direct for me. I
“ shall wait with inconceivable im-
“ patience, ’till I hear from Paris,
“ concerning the fate of my dear Sir
“ George. Pray for me, my dear
“ Mrs. Glover, that I may receive
“ comfort in the midst of my
“ troubles; which, how great so-
“ ever:

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 159

“ ever they are, I shall never forget
“ how much.

I am,

Dear Mrs. Glover's

Most affectionate friend,

And humble servant,

L. OWEN.

Misc

160 LOUISA: Or,

Miss OWEN to Madam Du
BOURG.

Dublin, June 14. 1755.

“ H E A V E N has at length, my
“ dear madam, releas’d me
“ from the wretch who ravish’d me
“ from you : his intention was to
“ have carried me to Leghorn, but
“ just heaven would not permit
“ him ; for a violent storm arose,
“ which split our ship: some fisher-
“ men on this coast observing me
“ float, they were so kind as to re-
“ lieve me ; and, under their care,
“ I regain’d my strength, and ar-
“ riv’d safe at Dublin. But oh !
“ my dear madam ! I tremble for
“ the life of Sir George ! the
“ wretch had the cruelty to inform
“ me, that he left him dead upon
“ the

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 161

“ the spot: judge my grief, and
“ despair, at this heart-breaking
“ news: I wept, I rav’d, and was
“ like one distracted.

“ I shall wait, with the greatest
“ impatience, for your answer, directed for me at Mrs. Ellis’s, in
“ High-street, Dublin. Oh! my
“ dear madam! I am on the rack
“ ’till I have your answer, which
“ will give life or death, to

Your distress’d friend,

L. OWEN.

Louisa had not waited more than a fortnight, before she received the following letter from madam du Bourg.

Madam

Madam Du BOURG to Miss
OWEN.

Paris, July 1, 1755.

“ **JUDGE** of the satisfaction of
 “ my mind, my dear Miss Owen,
 “ on the receipt of your letter, to
 “ find you safe out of the power of
 “ that villain, who, as an addition
 “ to his baseness, was so cruel as to
 “ inform you of the accident of Sir
 “ George; but, thank heaven, my
 “ dear Louisa, Sir George, tho’ def-
 “ perately wounded, still lives; we
 “ had but small hopes of him, when
 “ your letter arriv’d; but the sight
 “ of that, and knowing that you are
 “ out of the power of so base a
 “ wretch, has given a favourable
 “ turn to his disorder; and I hope
 “ that he will soon be able to leave
 “ his

VIRTUE IN DISTRESS. 163

“ his chamber ; he would have
“ wrote to you, but, alas ! he had
“ not strength to do it ; he begs his
“ dear Louisa will excuse his inca-
“ pacity of writing to her.

“ Monsieur du Bourg joins with
“ me, my dear, in the most ar-
“ dent prayers for your health and
“ safety.

I am,

Dear Louisa,

Your ever affectionate,

MARIA DU BOURG.

THE

THE receipt of this letter calm'd, in a great measure, the inquietudes of Louisa's mind: the inward satisfaction she enjoy'd, upon hearing that her dear Sir George was alive, and in a fair way to recover, gave a serenity to her features, which they had not enjoy'd since she left France.

Louisa had often taken notice of Mrs. Ellis, in whose house she lodg'd, to have an air and behaviour inconsistent with her way of life; and being desirous of knowing by what accident she had been reduc'd to the mean employment of letting lodgings for her bread; she took an opportunity, one morning, to ask how a person of her figure, and good breeding, came to be so reduc'd; which Mrs. Ellis, with that

easy

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 165

easy politeness which is only to be found in those people who have been conversant in the polite world, very complaisantly began as follows.



CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

The History of Mrs. ELLIS:

MY father, madam, besides a good estate, enjoyed considerable appointments at court; he had elegant apartments in the palace where he constantly resided with his family: 'twas there, madam, that I suck'd in the rudiments of politeness, as it were with my milk. My parents lived in as elegant a fashion as if they had been people of the first distinction. I had a suitable education, and every body imagin'd I should be a great fortune, the praises I every day heard bestowed on my person filled me with vanity. You will allow, madam, for the partial eyes of parents, who saw beauties in
me

me, which I believe the world never did; for in truth, an easy shape, with a tolerable set of features, were the utmost I could boast of; joined to these advantages, I had an air and manner which never failed gaining me admirers. I had a brother the most accomplish'd young gentleman I ever saw, who at the age of two and twenty, was sent abroad to complete his education. It was soon after his leaving England, that I became acquainted with Mr. Ellis; he was, madam, to sum up his character in a few words, the abstract of all human perfections: he was of this country, of small fortune, but large expectations; at my first acquaintance with him, he was a student in the inner temple: my father gave him encouragement, believing him to be a man of fortune; but when, with the greatest candor and sincerity

sincerity he laid before him the state of his affairs, my father gave him an absolute denial, and strictly commanded me never to see or converse with him more ; this was a severe task to one who loved like me. I took the liberty to expostulate with him on his behaviour, telling him, with Mr. Ellis's employment, joined to the fortune which he would be pleased to give me, I did not see any reason why we might not be happy.

To this my father answer'd, that Mr. Ellis was a very deserving young man, and that he could have no possible objection to him but his want of fortune ; and to tell you the truth, my dear, continued he, whatever the world may imagine, I am not able to give you any fortune, my way of life is so expensive, that tho' my places are very considerable, joined to the income of my own fortune,
yet

yet they are not sufficient to support my manner of living, and in my situation I cannot possibly retrench ; in short, I want resolution to do it. Alas ! my dear father, cry'd I, bursting into tears, since this is the case, what must become of me ?

Listen attentively, my dear Laura, to what I am going to say : since my affairs are situated in the manner which I have informed you, I have thought of an offer which colonel H. made me the other day. Old friend, said he, your daughter Laura is a most agreeable accomplished young lady, why don't you look out for a husband for her ? Then, without giving me time to answer, you live at a great rate, and with the additional expence of your son's travels, I am sure you must exceed your income : you know I have a clear estate of two thousand pounds *per annum*, one

I

thou-

170 L O U I S A : Or,

thousand of which I will settle upon your daughter, provided she likes to marry an old man; and as I desire nothing but her person, I think my offer ought not to be disregarded; your son is a very deserving young man, and the more you can save for him the better.

I thanked him for his generous offer, and promised to give him an answer in a few days. Now, my dear Laura, continued my father, as you can't think of marrying Ellis without a fortune, I would have you think seriously of what I have been saying to you. I burst into tears, and beg'd, for heaven's sake, that he would not insist on my marrying colonel H; that I could not possibly be happy with him: and as to Mr. Ellis, I should think no more of him, since it did not meet with his approbation.

Dry

Dry your eyes, my dear Laura, said he, kissing me, I am sorry it is not in my power to contribute to your happiness, by giving you to so worthy a man as Mr. Ellis, with a fortune suitable to your birth. I shall never, my dear, insist on your compliance with any thing that is contrary to your inclination; but I must needs tell you, that it is so very advantageous an offer, that I think it deserves a serious consideration. Saying this, he left me overwhelmed with grief and despair.

I could not think of banishing from my mind the man who was so dear to me, and marrying an old fellow for the sake of interest; in short, my dear madam, I threw myself into the arms of Mr. Ellis, and we were privately married. I knew my father's temper too well, to ever hope he would forgive an action so

contrary to his commands ; I however wrote him a penitential letter, which he never answered, nor would he ever vouchsafe to see me, so implacable was his resentment.

Mr. Ellis had very good business, but being too honest for his profession, it dwindled by degrees, till at length we had not any. Mr. Ellis might have met with sufficient employment, if he would have exercised his talent, and wrote against the government ; but this method of supporting himself not suiting his principles, he despis'd it ; and finding that our friends in England would not do any thing for us, we came over to this place, and resided at a small farm of my husband's, which brought us in about twenty pounds a year : here we lived for near eighteen years in the greatest harmony imaginable, cultivating it ourselves, and
living

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 173

living upon the produce of our own toil; when it pleased heaven to deprive me of my sole remaining comfort. Mr. Ellis had been in a decline for several years; the thoughts of his own poverty, join'd to the concern he was in to see me engaged in employments so different from my birth and education, robb'd him of his peace of mind, and clouded his days with perpetual sorrow. I beg'd that he would suffer no uneasy thought to intrude in his breast on my account; that I loved him so well, that I look'd upon nothing as a hardship; that our fatigues were mutual, and that I had rather live with him secluded from the rest of the world, than in my father's house, surrounded by all the pomp and elegance I had been bred up in: these kind assurances had no effect on him, and I had the dreadful misfortune of

174 L O U I S A : Or,

seeing him expire in my arms; my grief was insupportable, and had I not been blessed with the assistance of a superior power, I must inevitably have sunk under it.

I could not bear to remain in a place which for ever reminded me of my loss, and my circumstances not allowing me to live in any other place, I wrote to my brother, as my father had been dead for some years; and that kind brother was so good as to remit me two hundred pounds, with which I furnished this house, and have met with better success than my most sanguine expectations could have hoped for; 'tis now twelve years since, but I have never been able to overcome my concern for the loss of my dearest husband.

Louisa return'd her thanks for her civility, and commiserated her misfortunes. I have a great curiosity,
my

my dear madam, said Mrs. Ellis smiling, to know the history of your life, which, continued she, I have some right to insist on. Good heaven! cry'd Mrs. Ellis, when miss Owen had finish'd her recital, how astonished am I at the many misfortunes which have happened to you, owing to the vileness of a base detestable monster. The week following Louisa was made happy, by a letter from her dear friend Mrs. Glover.



C H A P. XVII.

London, July 14. 1755.

“ B L E S S me, my dear Louisa,
 “ one could scarce think it pos-
 “ sible for so many misfortunes to
 “ happen to so young a creature, in
 “ so small a space of time. Never
 “ was poor devil so astonish’d as my
 “ self at the receipt of your last fa-
 “ vour, dated from Dublin; instead
 “ of bringing with it the pleasing
 “ account of your coming home, it
 “ produced another attempt from
 “ that wretch Worthy, whom I now
 “ blush to call cousin.
 “ Your letter arrived when I was
 “ upon a visit, and Glover knowing
 “ who it came from, was on the
 “ point

“ point of committing sacrilege on
 “ the seal, when I flew in, and pre-
 “ vented this horrid violation of my
 “ property ; I could not forbear
 “ frowning at him, and shewing him
 “ a little female spirit, which I told
 “ him had been, time out of mind,
 “ our prerogative royal : his gills
 “ were inflamed ; he colour’d and
 “ look’d as angry as an enraged tur-
 “ ky-cock at the sight of his dame’s
 “ red holliday petticoat. I burst out
 “ a laughing, and ask’d him if he
 “ intended to beat me ? He then fell
 “ into the fullens, and would not
 “ answer a word, going thus from
 “ one extreme to another ; so I re-
 “ tir’d to a corner of the room to
 “ peruse your letter, when I could
 “ not help every now and then ex-
 “ claiming, the villain ! unfortunate
 “ girl ! upon leering at the poor cul-
 “ prit, I found that these exclama-

178 L O U I S A : Or,

“ tions had brought him to himself.
“ Lord bless me, my dear, cry’d he,
“ has any misfortune happen’d to
“ miss Owen? So, answered I, laugh-
“ ing, you have got rid of your
“ sulky fit. Lord bless the man,
“ did I not always tell him that I
“ would wear the breeches; besides, I
“ never promised to obey, knowing in
“ my own mind that I never should.
“ My dear Mrs. Glover, cry’d the
“ coaxing creature, I was never so
“ happy as since I have been under
“ the government of so agreeable a
“ creature. Upon my word, Mr.
“ Glover, my government is not
“ very despotical; but come, like a
“ true loyal and faithful subject, kiss
“ my hand in token of your alle-
“ giance; then holding out my hand
“ with a becoming gravity, the good
“ natur’d soul press’d it to his lips, smil-
“ ing at the same time, as if pleas’d
“ with

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 179

“ with the favour. So now this
“ great quarrel being amicably deci-
“ ded, I shewed him your letter,
“ and at the same time made him
“ take the oaths of allegiance never
“ to make the least attempt to pry
“ into any of my secrets, which ar-
“ ticles he faithfully vowed to per-
“ form.

“ Lord A. has been here several
“ times to enquire after you, when
“ the secrecy that we kept, I be-
“ lieve, made him suspect that it
“ was upon his account you were
“ denied. I then thought it proper
“ to inform him of your story,
“ which gave him great concern; he
“ seemed under great uneasiness,
“ when he heard of your obligations
“ to Sir George, whom he knows
“ extremely well, and speaks agreea-
“ bly in his favour. He inform’d
“ me, the other day, that he should

180 L O U I S A : Or,

“ esteem that the happiest hour of
“ his life, wherein he had the plea-
“ sure of seeing miss Owen, the
“ knowledge of whom had made a
“ thorough reformation in his prin-
“ ciples. You see, my dear, what
“ power we fine women have over
“ these lords of the creation. To
“ say the truth, his lordship has bid
“ adieu to every vanity, and is now
“ a good conversible animal ; Sukey
“ Sprightly has found him so to her
“ cost, for she is in love with him ;
“ and he concluding all his hopes
“ vanish’d by your acquaintance with
“ Sir George, has given the girl no
“ reason to find fault with him.
“ The loss of a lover would be a
“ sensible mortification to some wo-
“ men ; but I know my dear Louisa
“ has such a stock of prudent phi-
“ losophy, that she will neither mur-
“ mur nor repine at her loss.

“ This

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 181

“ This fresh attempt of young
“ Worthy has added to the vexation
“ of the good old man, who is de-
“ termined to take a trip over to
“ Ireland, to conduct you once more
“ safe among us ; my heart leaped
“ within me at this news, and I was
“ determin’d to make one of the
“ party. So Mr. Worthy, Glover,
“ and myself, together with the
“ Sprightly’s, set out next week ;
“ the females are to be left at Ches-
“ ter, under the care of my uncle,
“ while Glover proceeds to Dublin.
“ I would have cross’d the water,
“ but the wretch positively would
“ not suffer me, and insisted on it
“ with more spirit than I could have
“ thought him capable of : I was a
“ long time before I could determine
“ how to proceed, but at length I
“ yielded out of mere spite in being
“ contradicted in the very thing
“ which

182 L O U I S A : Or,

“ which I had set my heart on ; for
“ you must know, that I am grown
“ very plump about the waist, which
“ makes him so very careful of me,
“ that the loving creature attends me
“ like my shadow. Farewel, my
“ dear miss Owen, till you em-
“ brace

Your sincere friend,

M. G L O V E R.

A few days after the receipt of this letter, as Louisa was returning from church with Mrs. Ellis; she observed a man whom she thought she had some knowledge of, and upon a nearer view, she knew him to be one of Worthy's servants. Mrs. Ellis observing her turn pale, enquir'd the meaning of it; before she could
return

return an answer to Mrs. Ellis, the fellow came up. I perceive, cry'd he, that I am not mistaken; I am very glad, madam, to find that you have escaped the fury of the waves: You seem frighten'd, madam: Alas! were it in my power I would do you no injury; having always, in my heart, blamed Mr. Worthy for his base usage to so lovely a young lady. Louisa then regaining her courage, enquir'd of him, whether his master had escap'd the storm? I fear not, madam, answer'd the man, since, notwithstanding the strict search which I have made, I have not been able to hear any thing of him. Louisa now being thoroughly satisfied that the danger which she imagined herself in was entirely over, gave the man a guinea, and dismiss'd him, highly pleased with her generosity.

On

On her arrival at home, she had the pleasure of finding her long expected friend Mr. Glover; he congratulated her on the many providential escapes which she had made out of the power of that vile wretch Worthy. Mr. Glover behaved with great civility to Mrs. Ellis, having often heard his father mention both her and her husband with great respect. At his departure he made that worthy woman a genteel present for her kind behaviour to miss Owen, whom she could not part with without shedding tears; the love which she had conceived for that amiable young lady being truly maternal.

After a pretty rough passage, they landed safe at Park-gate, where they were received by their worthy friends, who were all rejoiced at seeing Louisa once more in England. Mr. Worthy shed tears, Mrs. Glover was
 2 gay,

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 185.

gay, and miss Sprightly's were polite. Don't you think, my dear miss Owen, cry'd Mrs. Glover, that the Sprightly's are good agreeable girls? I told you, that under my management they would come to something; tho' I assure you, if I had not found them very good natured and tractable, I should not have taken the pains to instruct them. Look you, my dear, this is a specimen of their walk: she then took two or three turns round the room in so awkward a manner, that set every body a laughing. The Sprightly's were both in great confusion; Child, cry'd she to the eldest, if you give yourself any airs, I shall acquaint lord A. of you. Miss Sprightly blushed; and turning to Louisa, Mrs. Glover, madam, is pleased to be merry at my expence, but knowing her lively humour, I can the more easily excuse her.

186 L O U I S A : Or,

her. In this manner did they pass their time on the road, making but short stages upon account of Mrs. Glover.

As they were looking out of a window at an inn in Dunstable, where they dined, they observ'd a nobleman's equipage to enter the yard, with an elderly gentleman in it, who took such particular notice of miss Owen, that obliged her to withdraw : a little after a message was sent in by the gentleman, desiring to be favour'd with a few minutes conversation with the young lady whom he had observed at the window. Louisa was in great confusion, not knowing what business he could possibly have with her ; before she could think of a proper answer to return him, his impatience made him enter the room. Louisa trembled from head to foot, at the
appear-

appearance of this gentleman ; nor could she account for this sudden alteration in her : he beg'd ten thousand pardons for his intrusion, but her great likeness to a sister of his, had made him guilty of such an indecorum. He then beg'd to know her name ; which, when she had informed him of, just heavens ! cry'd he, 'tis as I suspected ! thou art the image of my much loved sister ! O my dear lady Louisa ! what have I not suffer'd for my inhuman vengeance upon thee ! Louisa finding by his discourse that he was her uncle the earl of R, could no longer support her tottering frame, but fainted away ; but by the care of Mrs. Glover she soon came to herself. Earl R. beg'd pardon for his abruptness ; he then informed her that he was sufficiently punished for his guilt ; that from the time he had believed her

dead,

dead, he had never known a moment's peace of mind; his very dreams were haunted with dreadful spectres; and that whatever appearance of mirth he had put on among his loose companions, yet that his moments of reflection almost deprived him of his senses: he then beg'd of Louisa to inform him by what providential means her mother had escaped the effects of his fury, that the fellow whom he had employed for that purpose, had informed him that he had murdered her, and afterwards had thrown her body into the canal. Louisa then entered into a detail of her mother's and her own misfortunes, touching slightly on the merit of Sir George. Earl R. could not help shedding tears, at this melancholy recital. When she had finished, he beg'd her pardon for the troubles which he had brought her into;

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 189

into ; he then beg'd her acceptance of Sir Harry and Louisa's pictures, which he had found in his sister's cabinet. Louisa bowed in grateful acknowledgement of the favour.

After dinner this worthy company set out for this great metropolis, where we shall leave them to recover the fatigues of their journey, and so put an end to our chapter.

CHAP.



C H A P. XVIII.

A FEW days after earl R. waited on miss Owen; he presented her with all her mother's jewels, which were of great value, but what was most agreeable to her were the pictures of Sir Harry and lady Louisa, they were ornamented with jewels; but what added to their value, was their exact likeness to the persons, they being drawn by the inimitable pencil of that excellent genius Mr. Zinck. Louisa returned her acknowledgments to the earl for his present, and soon after he took his leave. Lord A. hearing of miss Owen's arrival, came to pay her a visit; he expressed great concern for the

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 191

the many mortifications which she had met withal. I am infinitely oblig'd to your lordship, answered miss Owen, for rescuing me at a time when I was in imminent danger; 'tis such an obligation, my lord, that I shall ever gratefully acknowledge. Lord A. bowed, and replied, that he should esteem himself happy in being any way serviceable to miss Owen. The approach of some company to Mrs. Glover, hinder'd Louisa from making a reply to lord A.

The next day she received a letter from Mrs. Ellis, with one enclosed from Paris, the contents of which gave her fresh uneasiness.

Madame

192 LOUISA: Or,

Madame DU BOURG, to *Miss*
OWEN.

Paris, July 28. 1755.

“ I AM sorry to acquaint my
“ dear miss Owen, that Sir
“ George has had a relapse : going
“ out the other day to take the air,
“ he caught cold, which brought on
“ a return of his fever ; he raves
“ continually on his dear miss Owen,
“ and talks to you as if you were in
“ the room : the surgeon seems to
“ have but small hopes of his life,
“ for his fever has heightened the
“ anguish of his wound.

“ I need not, my dear miss Ow-
“ en, inform you how agreeable
“ your company will be, and hope
“ in God it may be a means of re-
“ storing

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 193

“ storing Sir George. Monsieur du

“ Bourg joins with me in our re-

“ spects to yourself and your friends,

• “ and believe me to be,

My dear Miss Owen,

Your ever affectionate,

MARIA DU BOURG.

K 'TIS

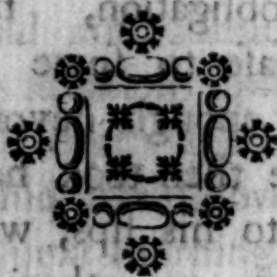
TIS impossible to express the uneasiness this letter gave Louisa. She melted into tears at the knowledge of her dear Sir George being relapsed, for she had flatter'd herself with the hopes of seeing him soon in England. Mrs. Glover advised her to go by all means, and that her husband should attend her. This Louisa would not submit too, considering the situation of Mrs. Glover; but at length she was obliged to submit, and Mr. Glover and she set out the next morning, and arrived at Paris, without any accident. Madame du Bourg received her with her accustomed civility, and informed her, that Sir George was not worse, but being fearful that too sudden a surprize might be attended with

with bad consequences, went to prepare him for Louisa's approach : the news of his dear miss Owen being so near him, gave him great joy, he beg'd to see her. This is a kindness, my dear miss Owen, cry'd Sir George, that I could never have expected ; to take such a long journey upon my account, lays me under such an obligation, that should heaven please to spare my life, it cannot be enough devoted to your service : he then took her hand and press'd it to his lips, while Louisa could return no other answer but tears : the sight of Louisa gave such an inward satisfaction to his mind, which he had been a stranger too for a long time ; in short, in less than a week there was a visible alteration in him for the better, and tho'

196 L O U I S A : Or,

he still continued weak, yet was in no danger.

Louisa's mind now being perfectly at ease, she wrote to Mrs Glover in the following terms.



Miss
than a week there was a visible im-
provement in him for the better, and the
which he had been a stranger too
an inward satisfaction to his mind,
tears: the sight of Louisa gave such
could return no other answer but
piled it to his heart, while Louisa
service: he had heard and
cannot be denied to your
heaven bless my life, it
such an obligation, that should
upon my account, lays me under
pected; to take such a long journey
George that I could never have ex-

Miss OWEN to Mrs. GLOVER.

Paris, August 27, 1755.

“ I HAVE the pleasure to in-
“ form my good friend Mrs.
“ Glover, that Sir George is now,
“ thank God, out of all danger, and
“ I am entirely happy. I can never
“ repay the obligation which I lay
“ under to you for this last act
“ of your kindness in letting Mr.
“ Glover attend me here; he has
“ behaved with the greatest share of
“ politeness and good-breeding, tho’
“ a discerning eye can easily per-
“ ceive he fights for the enjoyment

“ of your company, tho’ he strives
“ to hide it from me. I would
“ mention it to him, but know it
“ would shock his good nature ; but
“ as I am now safe under the pro-
“ tection of my friends, it cannot
“ be any breach of politeness to
“ leave me, as I am fully convinced
“ that he will not be happy till he
“ has the pleasure of seeing you.

“ Jenny receiv’d me with tears ;
“ the good-natur’d girl, it seems,
“ has never been easy since I was
“ carried away. She was the daugh-
“ ter of a clergyman of good family
“ in the north of England, who had
“ nothing to leave her at his death
“ but the extreme good education
“ which he had bestowed on her.
“ I always observed that she had a
“ man-

"manner and behaviour, joined to
 "a share of modesty and good
 "sense, which is not usually found
 "among people of her class; and
 "on this account, I always treated
 "her with particular regard, believ-
 "ing her to be the daughter of
 "some distress'd gentleman. Since
 "she has been here, madam du
 "Bourg has treated her with un-
 "common civility; and finding her
 "appearance and behaviour to be-
 "speak the gentlewoman, she in-
 "troduced her to several families,
 "where she had the happiness to
 "be taken particular notice of by a
 "young gentleman, whose name is
 "Ledove: he is in present possession
 "of an annual income of a thou-
 "sand livres, besides a considerable
 "addition on the death of his mo-
 "ther:

200 LOUISA: Or, V

of her: Jenny, without giving a direct answer to his suit, inform'd him of her birth, and present situation in life; which, so far from cooling his ardor, has rather increas'd it, as he has it now in his power to shew her that the possession of her person, is above every other consideration; so that one day next week is concluded on for the wedding. I sincerely wish her happiness, which I have very little doubt of; for there seems to be such a share of good sense, and good nature, on both sides, that I think mutual happiness must be the consequence.

I need say nothing more of Mr. Glover, who writes by the same packet, but that Sir George has

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 201

“ has a great value for him, and
“ monsieur and madam du Bourg
“ esteem him, and all long for an
“ opportunity of being better ac-
“ quainted with the lively, and ever
“ agreeable, Mrs. Glover. Every
“ one here sends their best respects
“ to yourself, Miss Sprightly, and
“ my worthy guardian.

I am,

Dear Mrs. Glover,

Your ever affectionate,

LOUISA OWEN.

C H A P.

K 5

After

"After the wedding, we are to
 "spend a week at Fontainebleau,
 "at a charming villa of monsieur
 "du Bourg's, and from thence to
 "Versailles."



LOUISA OWEN.

CHAP.

After

K 2



CHAP. XIX.

Mrs. GLOVER to Miss OWEN.

London, Sept. 11, 1755.

“ I Was fully convinc’d, my dear
 “ Miss Owen, that your pre-
 “ sence would have a surprizing ef-
 “ fect upon Sir George; it was the
 “ last, and most powerful effort,
 “ that could be used to save his
 “ life: female physicians would be
 “ of infinitely more use in the
 “ community, than the other sex;
 “ and I have often wonder’d, why
 K 6 “ the

" the legislative power does not take
 " it into consideration, as I am sure
 " no woman would refuse her pre-
 " sence, to save the life of a pretty
 " fellow, by the powerful efficacy
 " of her charms; the male physi-
 " cians should prescribe to the fe-
 " males: and by this means we
 " should be of mutual advantage
 " to each other.

" Indeed, my dear, you wrong
 " Glover by your suspicions; I am
 " sure there is nothing farther from
 " his thoughts, at present, than
 " myself: why, child, 'tis the first
 " time, since our marriage, he has
 " been so indulg'd; and 'tis too
 " pleasing an indulgence for him, to
 " be tir'd of it in so short a time:
 " consider we have been marry'd
 " al-

VIRGIL IN DISTRESS. 203

" almost seven moons ; a tedious
" time ; and in his account, I sup-
" pose, 'tis as many years.

" I am very glad to hear, that

" Jenny is likely to be so well dis-
" posed of ; she is a charming girl,

" and deserves as much to be hap-
" py as any woman in the world ;

" you don't tell me, whether the
" man is agreeable or not ; but,

" however, it is no great matter ;
" if she likes him, it is very well.

" William has brought a message
" from my uncle, who desires to
" see me this instant.

" I left my poor uncle, half right
" and half wrong, in great distress
" and anxiety, but, unhappily for them,
" the marriage coming home unex-
" pectedly, found them in bed to-
" gether, and stabbed the guilty
" couple "

Thursday, nine o'clock; Sept. 12.

“ I Left my poor uncle, last night,
“ in great affliction; having re-
“ ceiv'd a letter from his correspon-
“ dent, at Leghorn, to inform him
“ that his son was cast away at
“ Corona, in Portugal; and, after
“ travelling through Spain, he ar-
“ riv'd at Leghorn, in a distress'd
“ condition; and that, after taking
“ up a large sum of money, he
“ went to Padua, where he had an
“ intrigue with the marchioness de
“ T——, which was for a little
“ time conducted with the greatest
“ secrecy; but, unhappily for them,
“ the marquis coming home unex-
“ pectedly, found them in bed to-
“ gether, and stabb'd the guilty
“ couple

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 207

“ couple in each others arms. Thus
“ you see, my dear, that heaven
“ has at length punish'd the wretch
“ for his attempt on you; but I
“ know my dear miss Owen, has
“ too much good nature, and ge-
“ nerosity, to triumph at the death
“ of a vanquish'd enemy; no, she
“ will rather pity his unhappy fate,
“ and wish heaven had been kind
“ enough to have allotted him a
“ small space for repentance: 'tis
“ such a shock to my good uncle,
“ that I am in doubt whether he
“ ever will get over it.

“ I have

“ 'Tis

Saturday, September 21.

" I Have been so busy in attend-
 " ing my uncle, that I have ne-
 " ver yet been able to put a finishing
 " stroke to my letter; he has kept
 " his bed for this last week, and so
 " I am oblig'd to attend him, which
 " gives the poor soul great concern,
 " being apprehensive that my strict
 " attendance on him may prejudice
 " my health; but my dear Louisa,
 " I love him too well to neglect
 " him in his present situation; and
 " knowing that in him I shall lose
 " the dearest friend, and the best of
 " parents; the man who took me
 " under his roof, a poor helpless,
 " deserted and needy orphan.

" 'Tis

Monday, September 23,

" 'TIS as I suspected; your wor-
 " thy guardian is no more:
 " oh! my Louisa! his last wish was
 " for your happiness! good soul!
 " he is gone to receive his reward
 " of eternal and never ending hap-
 " piness! my tears flow so fast I can
 " write no more. Adieu,

My dear Louisa,

And believe me to be,

Your's, &c.

M. GLOVER.

" My

"My spirits are so affected, that
 "I cannot answer Mr. Glover's
 "Letter."

LOUISA was under great concern for the loss of her guardian, whose lamented Death was owing to the shameful irregularities of a much loved son.

After spending a month longer in France, Sir George being entirely restored to his health, they proceeded for England, after taking an affectionate Leave of monsieur and madame du Bourg, and madame Ledove. Nothing now was wanting to compleat their happiness, but the consent of the earl of R.
 whom

VIRTUE in DISTRESS. 211

whom Louisa now look'd upon as her only parent. The earl was agreeably pleased with the deference which was paid to him: he cheerfully consented, and gave her away the week following at the altar, when Mr. Glover did the same kind office for miss Sprightly. Soon after Mrs. Glover was brought to bed of a son, which added to the joy of this worthy couple.

Lady Owen has at this time two daughters, who both inherit their mother's beauty. Lord and Lady A. are as happy as love, honour, virtue, and sincerity, can make them. My good friend Mrs. Glover, whom I have the happiness of being extremely intimate with, is still

still the same sprightly, agreeable, and good natur'd companion as ever : her husband prevents her every wish, being still as fond of her as when first they ty'd the hymenial knot.

And now having brought these illustrious couples to the summit of human happiness ; in imitation of a Spanish author, I shall consecrate that pen which has recorded their adventures ; and after so noble an employment, discharge it from all future service.

F I N I S.



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